

Doctors demand lifting of ban on specialist

By Sarah Beeley

A letter signed by 85 per cent of GPs in the Tower Hamlets district of East London was handed to the district health authority yesterday, demanding the reinstatement of a leading obstetrician, Mrs Wendy Savage, who has been suspended for alleged malpractice.

One of the GPs leading the protest, Dr Mary Edmondson, said at Steel's Lane health centre yesterday that 68 out of the district's 84 GPs had signed, and four more were on holiday.

She said: "This speaks volumes on the way in which Mrs Savage is regarded in this district, particularly since alleged malpractice is involved, which is a very serious complaint. Despite this, the doctors have had enough confidence in her to put their names to this letter."

The letter was read to a noisy meeting of the health authority last night. About 50 protesters, many of them women with babies, went to the meeting and demanded to know details of the five complaints against the consultant.

A further petition from medical students taught by Mrs Savage at The London Hospital, containing 149 signatures—about 75 per cent of those canvassed—was also read out. It expressed support for "an inspiring and conscientious teacher."

Letters signed by about 100 hospital staff, from the local branch of the National Childbirth Trust and from the Community Health Council—which demanded an inquiry into the obstetrician's gynaeology department at The London Hospital, where some of the complaints are thought to have originated—were also given to the committee.

The district health authority chairman, Mr Frank Cumberlege, told the meeting that the matter was sub judice pending an inquiry, which is the next step in medical disciplinary procedures.

The inquiry would be chaired by a QC appointed by the Department of Health, he said, sitting with two doctors from outside the area.

Mrs Savage, senior lecturer in obstetrics and gynaeology at The London Hospital medical school, was suspended last week. Doctors in Tower Hamlets said yesterday that only one of the complaints against her came from a patient and concerned a perinatal death. The other charges involve caesarian sections. None concerns abortion.

The doctors are incensed about the suspension because they believe the dispute really stems from conflict within the hospital about Mrs Savage's enthusiasm for community projects.

Dr Edmondson said: "She virtually restarted, single-handed, domiciliary deliveries in Tower Hamlets, which is a deprived area. Like this is not easy." Mrs Savage also believes in minimum intervention by doctors in the birth, and allowing women to choose their own way to deliver.

Ironically, the GPs whose workloads were increased by her methods are solidly behind her. The doctors say that Mrs Savage is the only woman consultant obstetrician at the hospital, and that many women, particularly from the Asian community, will be distressed at being attended by a man.

Fire rages

A forest fire was threatening to reach homes in Devon last night. More than 100 firemen were trying to beat down the fire on Bracken Hill, Bovey Tracey, before it reached homes.

Review for nursing and visitor services

By David Hencke, Social Services Correspondent

A review of the community nursing and health visitor services was announced by Mr Kenneth Clarke, the health minister last night.

Mrs Julia Cumberlege, Conservative chairman of East Sussex social services committee, will head the inquiry, which will include two management consultants and a member of the public.

Mr Clarke made the announcement in a written parliamentary answer to Mr David Knox, Conservative MP for Staffordshire Moorlands.

He said: "We have decided to take a fresh look at the role of nurses, midwives and health visitors working as part of primary health care teams and in

Orgreave 'targeted' by picketing miners

By Malcolm Piters

The trial of 15 miners accused of rioting at the Orgreave coking plant near Rotherham began in Sheffield yesterday with the prosecution alleging there had been organised violence on "an appalling scale" with pickets mauling in the streets, demolishing lamp standards, making and throwing Molotov cocktails, building barricades and hurling bricks, stones and bottles at the police.

The men, from Scotland, South Wales, Co Durham, Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire, all denied charges of riotous assembly. Their trial is likely to last nearly a month.

This morning the judge, jury and barristers in the case will travel by coach from Sheffield crown court to view the site of the Orgreave plant where, the court heard, 5,000 demonstrators gathered on June 18 last year.

Yesterday Mr Brian Walsh, QC for the Crown, showed the all-male jury exhibits of pick-axes, a club, a metal tubular bar, ball bearings and spikes collected by the police at Orgreave.

He explained that the Orgreave plant, owned by the British Steel Corporation, was an important target for the pickets, because fuel supplies went to the steelworks at Scunthorpe.

In a lengthy preamble to the trial Mr Walsh recapitulated events leading up to the Orgreave picketing. He said that people would suggest that what they had intended was a peaceful attempt to persuade some factory drivers not to collect coals for the plant.

He said that Orgreave became the focal point of the dispute between the miners and the NCB. It was obvious to Yorkshire miners, their leaders, "supporters and eggheads," that the inter-

ference with the ability of Orgreave to produce coke would cause serious damage to the BSC, which was a major customer of the coal board.

He told the jury that riots, as far as the trial was concerned, referred to three or

MINERS at Ireland Colliery near Chesterfield yesterday ended a 24-hour strike in protest at five Yorkshire face workers joining the pit. The NCB said there was a shortage of experienced local face workers.

more people gathering together who had a common purpose by using force to help each other against anyone who might oppose them.

Mr Walsh said: "The Crown says that there was a riot going on and that that is beyond a shadow of a doubt and that

these men were there intending to take part in a riot. The law in this country says people must be permitted to go about mauling the streets, ripping them being intimidated or brought to a halt by those who use not stones, bottles, iron bars, and arguments or persuasion but physical force and overwhelming superiority and numbers because they believe that arguments might fail. It is the democratic position that we do not use force and violence."

He alleged that each of the 15 men had been actively involved in the violence, and that this had been witnessed.

He said the jury might think that "the demonstrators at Orgreave had been organised and co-ordinated. They had used walkie-talkies, radios, and had travelled there from all over the country, from South Wales and from Scotland."

Mr Walsh said that no miner by June 18 could possibly have been unaware of the chaos and violence on previous occasions

at Orgreave. The violence on the former Assistant Chief Constable Tony Clement had thought the police lines would be broken. He dispersed the demonstrators by using mounted police armed with truncheons and riot shields.

Mr Walsh said the jury would hear evidence from bouncers, who had seen pickets' antics outside their properties and rip down walls or fencing or overturn their vehicles. Many people locked themselves in their homes.

The hearing continues today.

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Airport halves Falklands transport costs

By Patrick Keatley, Diplomatic Correspondent

The opening of the new Mount Pleasant Airport in the Falkland Islands on Sunday will enable the RAF to phase out most of its refuelling over the south Atlantic. It will reduce the transport bill from its present annual level of £60 million to around £30 million.

Prince Andrew, already serving in the territory as a naval officer, will represent the Queen in performing the opening ceremony.

The second phase of the project to provide a crosswind runway and thus to make the airport operational for aircraft in all wind conditions is scheduled to be finished in mid-1982.

The precise timing and arrangements of this weekend's opening ceremony have not been announced in Whitehall, because the Argentine government has refused to announce the ending of hostilities since the abortive invasion of 1982.

The Alonsia government in Buenos Aires has been neither invited to the airport opening nor notified of it.

Starting next week, RAF wide-bodied Tri-Stars will take over the Falklands run from Brize Norton, via Ascension Island, where there will be a 90-minute refuelling stop instead of the previous overnight sleep and change of plane.

Things could have been different if the Hercules transports on the second leg meant that the journey lasted 13 hours. This will be cut to nine, with the first leg from Brize Norton to 84 hours.

The reduction will be for two Hercules flights per week for cargoes of awkward weight or shape. But the RAF's Tri-Star fleet will be modified to enable the last of the Hercules to be phased out at the end of

the year, British Airways has a six-month charter contract to provide 747 jumbo jets during this time, to keep up the full schedule.

The Defence Secretary, Mr Heseltine, will head a large group of political and public figures taking a Tri-Star proving flight for the ceremony.

The latest Whitehall estimate for the cost of the airport, 30 miles from Port Stanley, is £276 million, which includes terminal buildings and approach roads. A separate account of £119 million covers civil engineering works for the army and harbour work for the navy. The RAF is spending £48 million at Ascension for facilities which, it says, are unconnected with the Falklands operation and would have had to be built anyway.

But some buildings will be used by the Tri-Star crews.

Seamus Milne adds: "The new Falklands airport is a waste of money, according to Dr Paul Rogers of Bradford University's School of Peace Studies."

In a report on the base for the Quaker-backed school, Dr Rogers says the facilities show no signs of housing the island's economy and that the two runways will be vulnerable.

His report points out that, despite government claims that the base should stimulate the Falklands' economy, "it is a waste of money, according to Dr Paul Rogers of Bradford University's School of Peace Studies."

The report says the base would be vulnerable to the runway-busting bombs the Argentine air force now possesses. Massive and expensive air defences would be needed to protect it.

'Aids carrier' in hospital at top security prison

By Aileen Ballantyne

A potential Aids carrier is being nursed in the hospital wing at Wakefield top security prison, the Home Office said yesterday.

It also gave details of two further suspected cases, one of a woman recently released from Lower Newton gaol, near Durham, and one of a man at Wandsworth prison in London. He was transferred to Ham-mersmith hospital two weeks ago showing symptoms compatible with Aids.

But the Home Office refused to confirm a claim by the Prison Officers' Association that a second prisoner was under observation in Wakefield's hospital wing.

A spokesman for the POA said that the woman suspected of having Aids had been jailed for 28 days for prostitution offences more than two months ago. She was found to have Aids antibodies after a

blood test, and was held in the prison hospital before being released.

Such a case showed the need for Aids to be made a notifiable disease, said the spokesman.

The second man at Wakefield gaol had a homosexual relationship with the potential carrier, a year ago, outside prison, he said.

The first man in Wakefield had been found to have Aids antibodies in his blood about a month ago, but it was not possible to tell whether he was a carrier or if he would become ill with the disease.

The POA said it was now satisfied that all possible precautions were being taken by the Home Office to deal with suspected Aids cases, but stressed that it remained concerned that the second man at Wakefield had already been in the prison system for a year.

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Mr Clarke made the announcement in a written parliamentary answer to Mr David Knox, Conservative MP for Staffordshire Moorlands.

He said: "We have decided to take a fresh look at the role of nurses, midwives and health visitors working as part of primary health care teams and in

FoE drive for forests

By James Erlichman

A worldwide campaign to stop the rapid destruction of tropical rain forests on three continents was launched by Friends of the Earth in London yesterday.

Mr Jonathan Porritt, director of FoE and leader of the Ecology Party, said that the international pressure group was ready for a 10-year battle to end devastation of the world's most important natural resource.

He pledged support from activists in 27 countries who were preparing to tackle governments, consumers and the corporations responsible for the forests' destruction.

"It is time to move away from seals, whales, tigers, gorillas and other single endangered species," said Mr Charles Secret, who will lead the campaign from London.

In Britain, FoE is concentrating its attack on the timber industry, and the group yesterday called on consumers to boycott all products from furniture to construction materials to furniture to construction materials to furniture to construction materials.

Deaths request

The West Cornwall coroner, Mr Derrick Pepperell, has asked the Home Office for permission to hold an inquest on the four boys from a school in Buckinghamshire who were swept to their death at Land's End, although their bodies have not yet been found.

The IRA last night claimed that its masked gunman killed a 39-year-old Protestant at his secluded hillside home last week. A statement in Republic-Ireland News, mouthpiece of Sinn Féin and the IRA, said that William Heenan was a police reservist.

However, it emerged yesterday that he had left the force 20 years ago. The RUC said that he had no connection with the security forces whatsoever.

Mr Heenan had been attacked while leaving his cottage near the village of Leltern, Co. Down, in the early morning to feed his chickens and his body was found by his 12-year-old son, Sammy.

Mr Heenan's wife died two years ago and the boy is being looked after by relatives.

An initial theory that the killing was a case of mistaken identity had gained ground because of the unusually long delay before the IRA claimed responsibility.

NUM may sue German bank

By Patrick Wintour, Labour Staff

The National Union of Mineworkers may take legal action against the German bank IKB of Düsseldorf. The union believes that the bank wrongly handed over £4 million of its money earlier this year to the court-appointed receiver Mr Michael Arnold.

The money had been lodged with NCB's Finance, IKB's Luxembourg subsidiary, and the union contends that under Luxembourg banking law the money should not have been transferred without the union's permission.

Mr Arnold used the £4 million as an indemnity against IKB by the union.

A spokesman for the receiver said last night that he had no knowledge of any pending legal action. Since the receiver was the trustee of the union's funds, the indemnity had in reality not been taken out by the receiver but by the NUM.

Any legal action against IKB, which rebounded on the receiver, would be in the final report, rebound upon the NUM's funds.

The union's delegate committee last month voted to reject a £250,000 offer sent ahead during the strike, in what was seen as a prelude to purging its contempt and reclaiming control of its funds. However, £27 million sent to Dublin since the strike began. This money is awaiting a ruling on whether it belongs to the NUM or the receiver.

The NUM executive yesterday deferred until next Tuesday a decision on what disciplinary action, if any, to take

Thousands of former striking miners may be able to claim benefits denied to their wives and children after a ruling by the Social Security Commission yesterday.

The commissioners have ruled that the Department of Health acted illegally by deducting benefits from striking miners' wives and children while they received leave from local authorities and social services departments.

The ruling followed a test case brought by Mr Alexander Haddock, from Cornshead, who was denied benefit for his family during a week when his local authority gave him a £15 loan. He lost his case at a social security tribunal last year but the commissioners have now overturned the tribunal's decision.

Mr Gordon Brown, Labour MP for Dumfriesshire East, who helped Mr Haddock to bring his case, said yesterday: "The judgment shows clearly that the department has acted illegally because the money was a loan, not a capital payment."

This ruling affects thousands of miners in Scotland alone because authorities like the Irish Capital last year, and international publicity about the practice of joy-riding by teenagers.

The Law Lords upheld the appeal of Mrs Bernadette Ryan, of Hollywood Road, Wythenshawe, Manchester.

She said that she had called the police to her home to investigate a burglary. During a conversation with the police officer she admitted that she had bought a stolen video recorder for £110.

The magistrates dismissed the case but the Greater Manchester Police appealed to the High Court, which ordered the magistrates to find her guilty. The Law Lords yesterday reversed this decision.

Lord Roskill said the language which the draftsman had used in the act had fallen a long way short of allowing a guilty conviction.

Part of the act reads: "A person may be guilty of attempting to commit an offence if the facts are such that the commission of the offence is impossible."

The Law Lord said the language of the act would need to be much clearer and drastic than that to achieve a conviction in the case.

Lord Bridge, who concurred, said: "There is no more fertile field of legal controversy in the criminal law than that concerned with attempting the impossible."

"If one thing emerges clearly from the literature on the subject, it is that there is no consensus as to what the law ought to be, let alone as to what the law is."

Lord Edmund-Davies dissented. He said that either the video recorder had been stolen, in which case Mrs Ryan was guilty of an attempt to receive; or the recorder had not been stolen, in which case Mrs Ryan was guilty of attempted handling under the 1961 Act.

Strikers may be able to claim benefits

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Car security

Specially guarded car parks are to be provided for tourists in Dublin this summer to counter an outbreak of vehicle thefts. The move follows complaints about vandalism and car stealing from visitors to the Irish Capital last year, and international publicity about the practice of joy-riding by teenagers.

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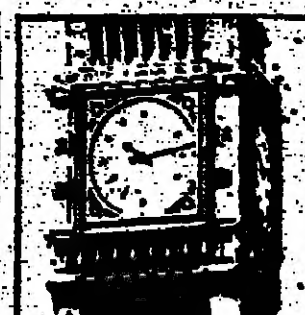
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David McKie

Bags of warp, not much whoof

HAD she picked up a bag of Bonn? Or was she apprehensive, perhaps, about the statement she was shortly to make on the failure of her security adviser to spot there was something odd about Michael Bettaney even as he staggered down the street, his pocket ablaze in a cumbersome pursuit of a swiftly disappearing girl?

Or maybe there was something still more political about the change which seemed to have come over the Prime Minister at question time yesterday, as he sombre and subdued, where normally she likes to belt the ball back over the net like Navratilova.

Possibly she already saw in her mind's eye a seething sea of Tories waiting in Perth eager to pounce on her with complaints about rating revaluation when she really ought to be spending the day quietly at home, easing Denis gently into his seventies.

Or was there something deeper still in yesterday's transformation: the start of a grand re-orientation. The news must have got through by now of the complaints on the doorstep during the county elections about her brassiness, her bossiness, her habit of sounding as though she was always right.

At question time yesterday that had gone. She didn't hector. When Labour's Ray Powell, with VE Day in

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mind, berated her for failing to create a Wales fit for heroes to live in, there was no swift retort, no rebuke: only an assurance of anxiety and concern.

And later when, on the Bettaney statement, Labour's elder statesman, Merlyn Rees, repeated a demand which had already been made and dismissed, for complaints commissioner for the security services, she suddenly seemed to soften. No commitments—but all right, she would consider it.

We shall learn in the next few days whether what she witnessed yesterday was the beginning of a deliberate shift in style—or whether it was just a bug from Bonn after all.

With Mrs Thatcher in this mood the real passion yesterday began only after she had waded through the protection of your which has lit up the place twice in the past fortnight broke out again yesterday as the eager, earnest Minister of State for Trade, Paul Channon, opened a debate on the Multi-Fibre Arrangement.

The ranks of Lancashire and Yorkshire were there in force to greet him, with snarling from the East Midlands and other places where live on the clothing and textile trade, and they were soon writhing in their places as the minister attempted a balanced review of the pros and cons.

Professor Silverton, for instance, had that subscription to the MFA had raised the cost of clothing in Britain by 5 per cent, and had removed more jobs than it created. "What hell," said Macleod's Neil Nicholas Winterton. "I am conscious that the industry has disrupted some of its calculations." All of them, Mr Winterton snorted.

Then there was the OECD. They had agreed, Mr Channon reported, that protection did not in the long run increase employment in the economy as a whole, but these were generalities, said Keith Hampson (Con, Leeds NW). What mattered was that the clothing and textile industries were so heavily concentrated in particular parts of the country.

It could have been the miners' dispute all over again. But Mr Channon was coming to the point Britain wanted the MFA to continue. Loud approving rumbles all round.

On the other hand, how long would it last and precisely in what form? There were other negotiable matters. The British Government in isolation, he felt bound to warn, would not necessarily get its way in full.

Indeed, many believe a more liberal system, was both inevitable and right. The sound of it, they were not very conspicuously represented in the House of Commons yesterday.



Getting a first-hand, and first-foot, impression of conditions in inner-city Bradford is Sir Richard O'Brien, who has been visiting several areas of urban deprivation as chairman of the Archbishop of Canterbury's commission on the Church's urban priorities. The commission's report is due to be published later in the year, and is expected to lead to a two-year programme of action. Sir Richard talked to local church and civic leaders, who told him that Bradford still had a densely populated inner city, and that there was a strong sense of local identity.

Picture by Dennis Thorpe

CRE considers case against solicitors

By David Rose

Allegations that solicitors are racist in refusing to brief black barristers are to be considered by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), the chairman, Mr Peter Newsam, said last night.

At a meeting earlier in the day with representatives of the black bar, led by Mr Sibghat Kadri, a former president of the Society of Black Lawyers, Mr Newsam was told of the formation of a monitoring project to gather evidence of discrimination.

The project will apply for funding to the CRE and hopes that its evidence will be followed by a full-scale investigation into the solicitors' profession by the commission, under the terms of the Race Relations Act.

The project pre-empted a meeting between the Law Society and the bar senate later this month called to discuss the allegations. Last night, Mr Kadri said that he had no faith in the Law Society's ability to confront the problem and that independent action was necessary.

It is thought that the planned monitoring project will concentrate on cases where black defendants have written to barristers asking them to take on their cases.

only to be overruled by white solicitors.

Mr Kadri said that he had personal experience of this in at least 40 cases during the past two years, and he also asked Mr Newsam yesterday to write on behalf of the CRE to prison governors, asking them to ensure that black prisoners were fully aware of their right to choose counsel.

Mr Newsam said that he was seriously concerned at the evidence he was given yesterday and added that the application for a grant would be seriously considered.

There was as far as he was aware, no provision by the Law Society to ensure that equality of opportunity was observed and he felt that there was a marked reluctance by the profession to address the problem. In any institution where this type of decision is left entirely to the discretion of individuals, there is always a possibility that things will go wrong, he said.

The problem was made worse, because any attempt to complain by barristers ran the risk of breaking rules of professional conduct, he said.

"It's a really serious issue which has to be confronted: the equivalent of a company recruiting entirely by word of mouth — if it's all white it will go on being all white."

Fall by over a third in overseas students

By David Hearst

The number of overseas students studying in Britain has fallen by over a third since Mrs Thatcher came to power, the British Council said yesterday. The council said that Britain was losing ground to Japan, France and the United States, which will expand their scholarship programme by 50 per cent next year.

The overseas student population in Britain fell from 88,037 in 1979-80 to 55,608 in 1983-84. The council said that the Asian market for overseas students had been captured by America. The number of Chinese, Indonesian and Malaysian students studying there has risen by up to one third in the last two academic years.

Mr Derek Beard, assistant director general of the council, said: "These figures are not good news for a country which

prides itself on the international reputation of higher education. Worldwide, about one million people are studying overseas and the number is increasing by 14 per cent a year. But between 1976 and 1981 our share of the market fell by 25 per cent and is still falling."

Mr Beard said that West Germany contributed £400 million a year for the education of 66,000 students, and France taught 100,000 students a year.

The council said that the number of Commonwealth students has fallen by 37 per cent since 1978-9. The fall in overseas students, which was started by the Government's decision that they should pay the full cost of their higher education fees, had been partially offset by a £87 million government programme to subsidise students from developing countries.

Hormone banned

By David Pallister

Doctors were told yesterday to stop giving pituitary gland hormones to children with growth problems.

The hormone treatment has already been banned in the United States after the death of three Americans in their twenties and thirties who were treated several years ago.

They died of a very rare disease, creutzfeldt-jakob, which normally affects only old people. It is a terminal disease following progressive dementia.

A spokesman for the DHSS said that supplies in this country, from the Centre of Applied Microbiological Research at Porton Down, were produced differently, from America. But it was felt prudent to stop the treatment. Genetically produced hormones are undergoing tests at the moment and it is hoped that this method will be used in the near future.

Scrutiny of police

By Stephen Cook

The new Police Complaints Authority is to use its discretionary power to supervise police investigations into two instances of alleged misconduct by officers, although no member of the public has made a complaint.

The first is the allegation that officers in Merseyside have been using police computers to find the winners of a car number plate competition being run by BP and National and suggesting that they share the prize. The PCA decided to supervise because of the "considerable public interest."

The second is the case of Mr Ronald Herridge, who was discharged at Chelmsford Crown Court last week by Mr Justice Forbes. The judge said the police had acted in a bullying and oppressive manner while obtaining an alleged confession that he had killed his mother. Essex Police referred the case to the PCA.

Judges to train in family matters

By Malcolm Dean

JUDGES who hear family and civil court cases are to receive training, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham, announced yesterday.

The move will be welcomed by family law reform groups, which have joined the Law Society in criticising the courts for inconsistent judgments on family cases over which the bench has wide discretion.

Judicial training programmes in Britain have lagged behind many other countries. Many judges believed they did not need training but residential seminars were introduced in the 1970s.

A Judicial Studies Board was set up in 1979 after a working party chaired by Lord Bridge produced a report on judicial training.

The new three-day training seminars will concentrate on issues like access, custody and division of property in family proceedings and housing and debt in civil cases.

Last year, the Judicial Studies Board organised three such seminars for some 240 experienced crown court judges and recorders.

Training seminars in civil and family jurisdictions will begin next year. Officials at the Lord Chancellor's Department estimate that all 400 registrars, one-third of the 1,000 recorders and half the 375 circuit judges will attend the seminars.

Reform will reduce the numbers eligible

Means-testing is planned for home repair grants

By Geoff Andrews, Local Government Correspondent

The Government is planning a sweeping reform of housing improvement system to make many more homes eligible for grant — but only a fraction of their owners.

Through a system of means-testing designed to make sure that those who cannot afford vital repairs get the most assistance, and to do away with the present inequitable method, based on rateable value, the new grant system points to a sharp reduction in the number of people who will qualify.

Apart from the basic grants, the new system also proposes an interest-free loan system for repairs in which owner-occupiers will have to sign over part of the equity of their home to the local authority.

The house will be valued and the percentage of the grant calculated, so that as the value of the house appreciated, the council's share would increase. If, for example, the house doubled in value, the council would take back twice the amount in grant.

The system was criticised yesterday by housing organisations. The housing charity, Shac, said that it was a disappointing response to a good opportunity for reform and suggested that the conditions for qualification looked to be just as arbitrary as the old rating system.

The director of the Inset of Housing, Mr Peter McGurk, said that the green paper outlining the possible changes was



Mr Ian Gow: giving nothing away

a clear signal that the Government intended to reduce spending. It would lead to a decline in the quality of housing.

The green paper is designed to launch legislation within the year which could lead to the new regulations coming into force in the autumn of next year.

It takes as its cornerstone the idea that owners are primarily responsible for their own repairs and improvements and seeks measures to involve the leading institutions in the building industry and encourage owners to help themselves.

The limit on the age of houses which qualify for grant would be changed from those built before 1919 to any pre-war housing.

To qualify for one of the new grants a house owner will have to undergo a means test, probably linked to a reformed housing benefit system.

What limits will be imposed before an owner loses out on the grants is still far from certain although figures of £30 a week and savings of £3,000 have been suggested as the top limits.

Mr Ian Gow, the Housing Minister, would give away nothing yesterday when he introduced the green paper, and although the change has obviously been priced, probably at a lower level than current spending, he would only say that it would be "unwise when you are moving to a new system to make a forecast of what the take-up would be."

One of the problems which will face local authorities having to administer a system like the one envisaged in yesterday's document would be the administrative costs of means tests that will have to have a sliding scale of assets versus costs of the repairs if a new form of poverty trap is to be avoided.

Under the proposals, all improvement and repair work to bring a house up to a "standard of fitness" would attract grant so long as the owner passed the eligibility test.

The loans would be discretionary for improvements above the level of the fitness standard and would be subject to the same eligibility tests.

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Walk-through aquarium and tundra display will be first parts of modernisation to create 'structured experience'

London Zoo launches £21m 'theme park' rebuilding plan

By Dennis Barker

LONDON Zoo is to move closer to being a theme park with plans announced yesterday for a £21 million rebuilding programme lasting until the year 2000 and starting with a £2.4 million aquarium with a Sin, chick acrylic glazing and a North American tundra display.

By the end of the century the present scattered buildings of the zoo will be replaced by 10 animal centres with simulated natural environments which will show about two-thirds of the species now on view.

The aquarium will be built on the site of the present parrot house and will replace the one underneath Mappin Terrace, which will be redeveloped as the North American tundra exhibit.

Mr David Jones, director of zoos, said that a new aquarium in the US would cost about \$20 million to \$30 million and "we don't feel it would offer the visitor very much more in the way of a visual experience than the one we are suggesting now."

The giant and smaller tanks have been designed as a "planned experience" with two main halls. One will show a series of fish in tanks, including "touch tanks" so children may touch the fish. Visitors will go on to a larger hall which will show underwater life in more detail in medium-sized tanks.

Finally, visitors will move to a large 88,000-gallon tank, where they will stand inside a circle on glazed water, which will give them the feeling of being on the seabed. The aquarium is expected to be completed by 1988.

The North American tundra exhibition will cost £3

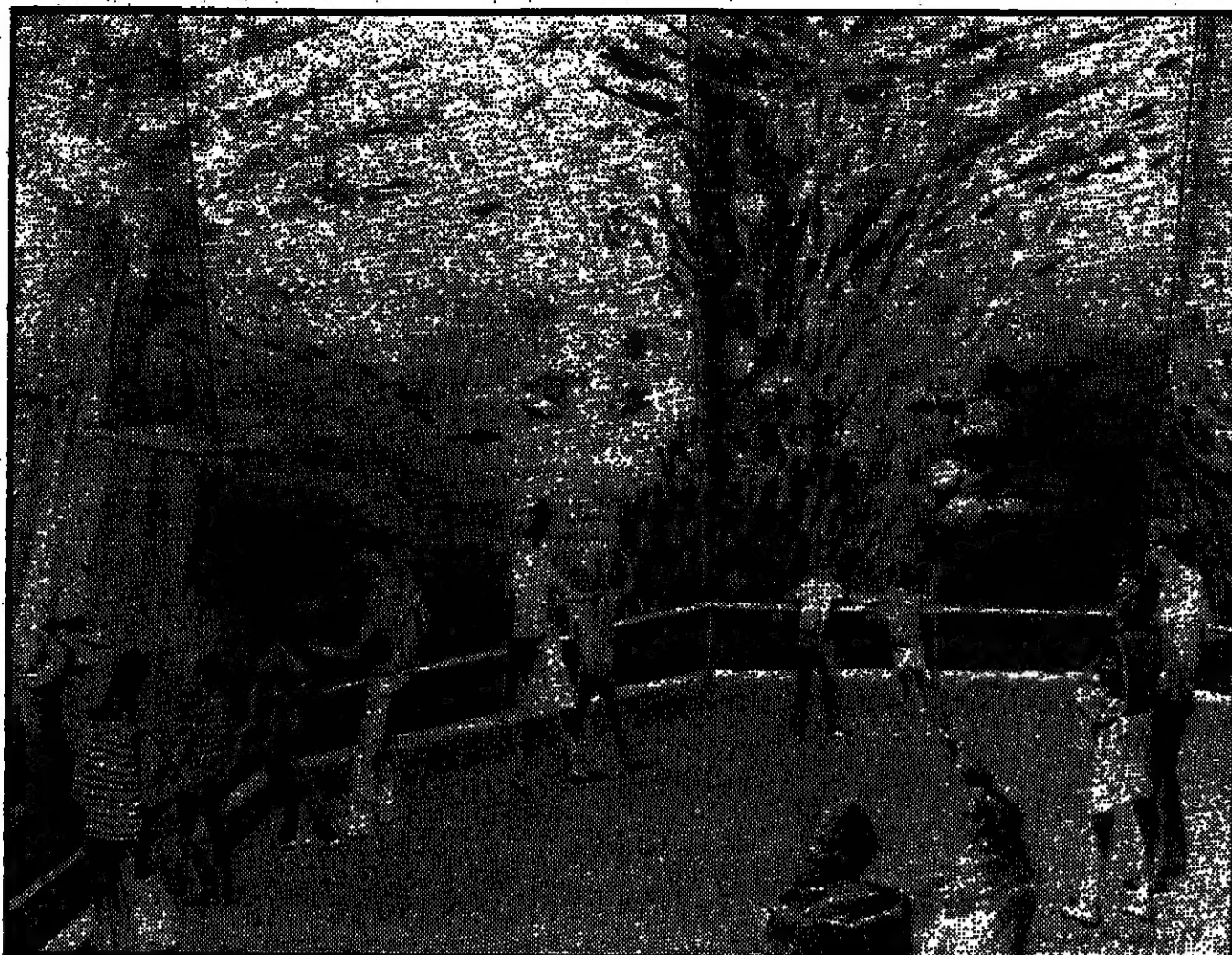
million and utilise the main structure of Mappin Terrace, which simulates mountains. The zoo improvements, considered necessary to boost the present one million a year admissions, will be helped by £8 million over three years granted by the Government last year. Of this, £6 million will go to paying off an annual deficit of £2 million a year, £1 million will be used to wipe out the zoo's overdraft, and £1 million will go towards capital development.

The Government has promised up to £750,000 a year if matched pound for pound by private sponsorship. The capital rebuilding programme will depend heavily on such sponsors and Mr Jones said yesterday that if any company or organisation wanted to sponsor the aquarium their name would be given to it.

At yesterday's launch of the proposals zoo officials said that experience elsewhere, especially in North America, suggested that a more "structured experience" was the way for zoos to go. Visitors would still be able to wander around in any way they wished.

"If anyone objects to our new plans," said Mr Jonathan Griffin, the zoo's commercial manager, "they should remember that we could run a completely Victorian zoo, having bears in pits with a pole in the middle. But then people would object to us keeping animals in conditions like that."

Some of the animals have already been moved for the redevelopment, which will not include any listed buildings, but will still have to receive planning permission. The bears have gone to Dudley Zoo in the Midlands.



UNDERSEA SCENE: An artist's impression of the large tank planned for London Zoo's new aquarium.

Jobless youth no fault of the schools, says Willis

By Andrew Mearns
Education Staff

Secondary schools could not be blamed for the high levels of youth unemployment, Mr Norman Willis, TUC general secretary, said yesterday. He said some people mistakenly believed that education they provided was a big factor contributing to the problem. That was misguided, and the belief that a better school curriculum would dramatically improve young people's chances of getting jobs at a time when almost 40 per cent of the 3.2 million unemployed were under the age of 25.

"The causes of youth unemployment lie outside the schools. It is not in the schools that we will find solutions to the scandalous levels of unemployment among our young people," he said.

"A 17-year-old bristling with work-related skills may be better able to compete for a job — but only if a job is there to compete for. The job of schools goes beyond meeting the narrow requirements of employers."

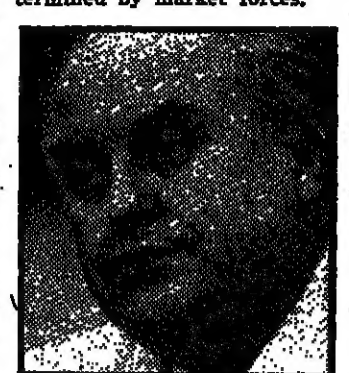
Mr Willis told a London conference of employment and education, organised by the TUC Education Alliance, that all pupils need help to understand how industrial society works. They also need basic skills and flexibility. He called for coordination of

the curriculum, examinations and teacher training, and the provision of money to make improvements possible.

● Britain no longer has the best education system in the world and has fallen sadly behind her competitors, Sir Kenneth Cornfield, president of the Institute of Directors, said yesterday.

The most serious fault was the lack of graduate engineers, said Sir Kenneth, writing in the institute's magazine, The Director.

He also suggested that Britain should look at the way it paid for its education. The shape and size of the higher education system should be determined by market forces.



Norman Willis — mistaken belief

Miner 'told of dropping concrete off bridge'

By a Correspondent

A court heard yesterday how a young miner admitted to police that he had dropped a concrete block from a bridge, killing a taxi driver as he took a working woman to his colliery during the miners' strike.

Reginald Hancock, aged 21, was alleged to have said: "I put the block on the railings and just gave it a little push and it went over. I heard a bang and glanced behind and saw the car go up the tank and then we ran like hell."

Cardiff Crown Court was told that Hancock said he had gone to the bridge on the heads of the Valleys road near Merthyr Tydfil, Mid-Glamorgan, after another miner, Russell Shankland, also 21, had phoned him and asked if they were "going to do it."

Asked by Detective Constable Robert Davies where the 46th block had come from, Hancock allegedly said: "We only found it two minutes before the convoy came. We went up and sat down. We saw a panda car go past, then the 'convoy'. Detective Constable Davies said that Hancock had told him that Shankland had dropped a 8ft concrete post, which missed the vehicles.

Detective Constable Davies said Hancock had at first denied all knowledge of the incident and admitting it to the head of South Wales CID, Detective Chief Superintendent Don Carsely, still refused to name his companion.

Hancock also alleged to have told police: "I thought I was over the middle lane. I didn't mean to do any damage — just to frighten."

Asked whether the third defendant, Anthony Williams, was present, Hancock said at first: "He's not involved. When we ran away from the bridge into the fields I jumped the gate and we saw him, and he came with us."

Earlier the court had been told that a difference of one mile per hour either way in the speed of the taxi could have resulted in a concrete block dropped from the bridge landing on the bonnet or roof of the car instead of smashing through the windscreen.

All three defendants, of Rhymney, Mid-Glamorgan, deny the murder charge. The trial continues.

Ecologists call for policy by referendum

By Michael Morris

Ecology Party candidates in the Northern Ireland district council elections on May 15 are proposing a referendum for reaching compromise and consensus in the province.

Three candidates — one standing as an independent ecologist — say they are proposing the referendum to break away from the two-party system and allow the people of Northern Ireland to vote for a range of options on their future.

Votes would be cast under a system of proportional representation, already used in the province.

The independent candidate, Mr Peter Emerson, of Belfast, argues that if the Northern Ireland voters can use proportional representation for electing people those elected can surely use it for selecting policies.

The electorate would list preferences for such options as a Northern Ireland federated to, united with or independent of London and/or Dublin.

An independent panel, the ecologists suggest, could choose a dozen options for the multiple choice referendum, which has been recently adopted by the Ecology Party and the Irish Green Alliance.

The referendum would be analysed on a weighting system, so that each preference cast would receive points in direct proportion to the number of options available.

The proposal has been put to the Northern Ireland Office, the Northern Ireland Office, and the Liberal/SDP Alliance. Mr Tony Jones, the Ecology Party secretary, said that politicians had fixed positions, making it hard to get the idea adopted, but privately they believed that compromise would have to be accepted "somewhere along the line."

Mr Emerson, a former community worker, said that a multiple choice referendum, a product of many years of thought, would be a catalyst of consensus. He added: "By listing a dozen options, in whatever order people chose, they would be able to vote in a variety of ways."

The system, the candidates say, could be used for electing a council or assembly, and for the latter to elect an executive.

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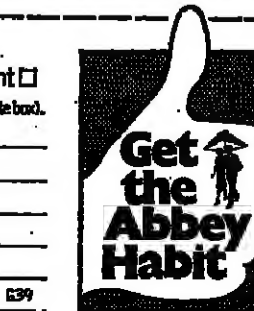
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Zimbabwe discusses election powers

From Andrew Meldrum in Harare

Parliament resumed yesterday to renew the Government's emergency powers which, the Home Affairs Minister, Mr. Muboko, said, are needed to maintain law and order during elections, expected next month.

Mr. Muboko told Parliament that the draconian powers are needed to combat violent interference planned for the campaign period by Zimbabwe's anti-government dissidents.

Mr. Muboko alleged that the Opposition party of Mr. Joshua Nkomo, the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (Zapu), had sponsored the dissident violence which had been aimed against the Government and members of the Prime Minister, Mr. Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union (Zanu) party.

Mr. Muboko also said that the emergency powers are needed to oppose South Africa's destabilisation of Zimbabwe by the apartheid regime's support of the dissidents.

Mr. Muboko listed many dissident atrocities that have occurred since January this year, including 29 murders, 26 rapes and 139 armed robberies of \$56,000. He said the Zimbabwe army has had 61 contacts with bands of dissidents and 432 sightings of the roving renegees have been reported.

Although passage of the emergency powers is assured by the ruling Zanu party's 57-seat majority in the 100-seat house, debate over the controversial measure was expected to continue later last night, and a vote to be taken late today.

The former Rhodesian Prime Minister Mr. Ian Smith, now the leader of a white opposition party, was the first to speak against the emergency powers, which include the power to detain people indefinitely without trial.

Mr. Smith criticised the Mugabe Government's use of the emergency powers, which was ironic considering that Mr. Smith's Rhodesian Front Government first instituted the powers in 1965 to suppress black nationalism.

Mr. Smith said the Mugabe Government was "making the classic mistake of using military powers to try to solve a political problem."

SA cuts local powers

From Patrick Laurence in Johannesburg

The Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning, Mr. Chris Heunis, has told Parliament that provincial councils will be phased out between April and June, 1986.

The four provincial councils were originally established in 1910 to guarantee a degree of autonomy for the four colonies which joined together to form the then Union of South Africa. Their most important powers are control of white education, hospitals, and roads.

Under the plan outlined by Mr. Heunis, these powers will be split in accordance with the new tri-racial constitution, into "own affairs" and "general affairs". Racially identifiable "own affairs" will be transferred to the white, coloured, and Indian ministers' councils formed by the majority parties in the tricameral Parliament.

Common or "general affairs" will, however, be the responsibility of a tri-racial executive committee and an administrator appointed by the State President from "serving politicians".

The changes have been designed to facilitate devolution of power by making each race responsible for its own communal affairs. But according to opposition spokesmen, by bringing them under the control of Parliament and the President, they will increase the authority of the central Government at the expense of the province.

Britons still held

Lagos: A High Court judge here yesterday rejected a request for the release of two detained British engineers accused of stealing an executive jet.

Kenneth Clark and Angus Patterson, employed by the British firm, Bristow Helicopters in Nigeria, have been held for nearly a year. They are accused of piloting a British executive jet from Lagos airport in May last year while private flights were banned.

Clark and Patterson, who were not in court yesterday, were discharged when the federal attorney-general dropped the case. They were rearrested as they left the court and charged again.

The defence argued that it was unconstitutional to try the two men again on a similar charge. Clark and Patterson are next due in court on Monday.

A British diplomat, Mr. Ian Kyrle, saw the two men last week. They were coping with difficult circumstances in prison. — Reuters.

More than 23 die in longest bout of shelling for a year

Gemayel told to quit after latest Beirut fighting

Beirut: Lebanon's main coalition of Christian political leaders yesterday called for an end to sectarian fighting after overnight shelling killed at least 23 people in Beirut.

But one well-known Christian, the former president, Mr. Suleman Frangieh, who is closely allied with Syria, called for the resignation of President Amin Gemayel, also a Christian.

The 15-hour duel across the Green Line battlefield, in which at least another 70 people were wounded, was the longest bout of shelling between mainly-Muslim west and Christian east Beirut in more than a year.

Police said at least five blocks of flats were gutted by uncontrolled fire. Shooting prevented fire brigades from moving in to put out the fires.

Mr. Frangieh said at a press conference in north Lebanon that Mr. Gemayel was either in collusion with militant leaders of the Christian Lebanese Forces militia, which is opposed to reconciliation with Muslims, or was afraid to confront them. "In either case, he is not worthy of being President," Mr. Frangieh said.

In east Beirut, a former cabinet minister Mr. Charles Malek said after a meeting of the Christian Lebanese Front coalition that it wanted to save Lebanon from an alarming crisis.

Calling the past nine days of fighting in Beirut part of a conspiracy against the Lebanese people, especially the Christians, Mr. Malek said the Front would try to halt all the fighting in Lebanon.

It was seeking with all means at its disposal to halt the killing, destruction, and displacement of people, he said.

The Front is dominated by the Phalangist and National Liberal parties, which were moving to support Syrian plans for Muslim-Christian reconciliation before a revolt last month in the Lebanese Forces Christian militia.

The militia called last week for a national dialogue to end sectarian strife, although its new leader Samir Geagea, has

A TOTAL of 21 Israeli soldiers have committed suicide in Lebanon since the 1982 invasion and the stress of military duty in the volatile south was partly responsible, the Defence Minister, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin said in parliament yesterday. — Reuters.

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series of meetings, including "amnesty, reinstatement and all other pending political problems."

In Pyongyang, North Korea, the Chinese Communist Party chief, Mr. Hu Yaobang, had nine hours of talks with Kim Il-Sung during an unannounced visit over the weekend, the New China News Agency reported yesterday.

It said that Mr. Hu, making his third trip to North Korea in four years, discussed bilateral relations and ways to relax tensions on the Korean peninsula during his visit from May 4 to 8.

The two leaders shared identical views on all issues discussed, the agency said, but gave no details.

Those attending the talks included Kim Jong-il, the son of the late president Kim Il-Sung, the Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister, Zhu Qizhen, and Xu Xin, deputy chief of the general staff of the Chinese armed forces. — AP/Reuters.



Put in the picture: A Japanese photographer, Toshiyuki Matsumoto, identifies photographs he took moments before the murder of the Philippines' Opposition leader, Benigno Aquino. He was giving evidence at the trial for murder of the armed forces chief, Fabian Ver, and 25 others.

Lebanon's Christians are now on their own as never before

Beirut may now be seeing the last stage of the civil war. David Hirst reports

PERHAPS even more obviously than usual, no one really knows what started the latest round of Lebanese fighting.

Ten days ago, Beirut's so-called "traditional" fronts began to witness the kind of small-scale, sporadic changes which have unusually faded out as quickly as they began. But for the first time since last July — and the application of a much-vaunted security plan in Greater Beirut — they steadily grew in scale and intensity.

Barriadees went up. The six crossings between the Muslim and Christian halves of the city were closed down one by one.

With an inexorable but all too familiar logic, skirmishes confined to the largely deserted ruins of the city centre escalated into artillery duels which struck at random deep into residential areas on both sides of the Green Line, making Monday night, with its scores of civilians killed and injured, one of the bloodiest and most terrifying in 10 years of civil war.

Nor does anyone know what course the fighting will take: whether it will develop into an all-out conflagration, whether it will be protracted or intermittent. But insofar as it has any deeper meaning, there is perhaps more than usual conviction in predominantly Muslim West Beirut about what that meaning is. This, it is being widely said, is the last round of the civil war.

Whatever its specific causes, the general breakdown of the Beirut ceasefire is ultimately a product of the Israeli withdrawal from the south. Israel's interference in Lebanon's internal affairs has been chiefly marked by its championing of the Maronite Christians, or at least the Phalangist militiamen among them, its great ambition has been to bring the whole country so thoroughly under Phalangist control that a pro-Israeli president would be able to conclude a peace treaty with it, in defiance of the Arab world and Lebanon's own internal opposition.

Ever since that ambition came to nothing, the Israelis have been withdrawing both politically and territorially. And this process enters its final stage: it is the Phalangists who are paying the price.

Two months ago, in a bid to stop the rot, Dr. Samir Geagea and his Phalangist-dominated Lebanese Forces militia staged their "uprising" against President Gemayel, whom they saw as weak, mercurial, and subservient to the Syrians.

But within six weeks the new saviour of the Christian community and his followers had suffered two military defeats reminiscent of the rout that followed the Israeli withdrawal from the Shouf Mountains in September, 1983.

In the Sidon area, at least, it was the Lebanese Forces' own excesses — six weeks of one-sided shelling of the city — and their precipitated withdrawal which brought calamity upon heads of the Christians they had come to "protect". Yet, no sooner had this happened, than, Dr. Geagea, in a belated attempt to press conference, served notice that, henceforth, the Christians could rely only on their guns. Everything that had been taken by force would be recovered by force.

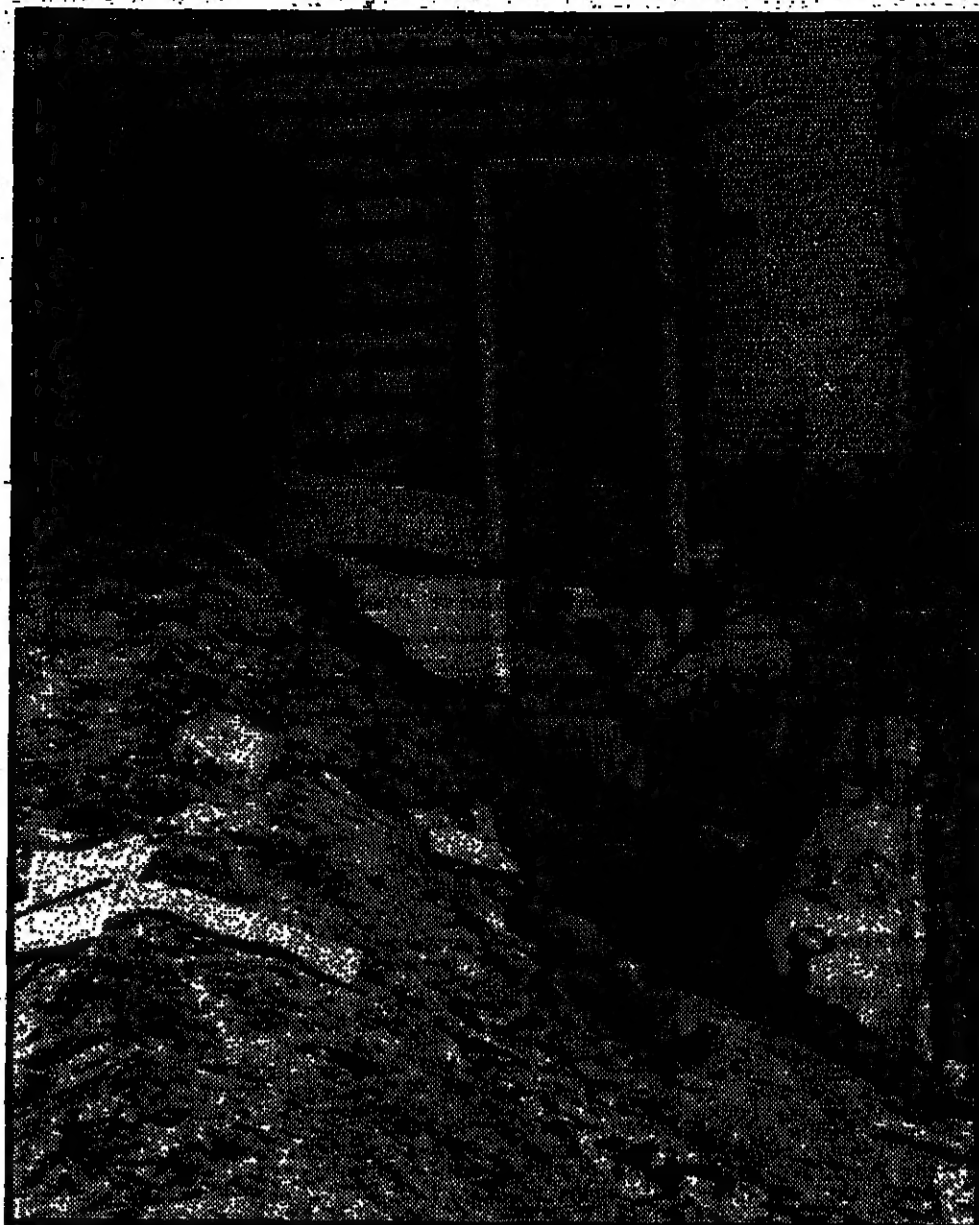
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was seeking to react what had happened in the Shouf, the al-Kharoub, and Sidon.

Only this time it was not some outlying outpost of Lebanese Christendom that would face the Druse-Muslim onslaught, it was their last redoubt, the Maronite heartlands north of Beirut, which Dr. Geagea has clearly delineated as his own.

In the eyes of almost everyone else, this is a sure recipe for Christian suicide. The Maronites, they say, cannot indefinitely defy their Muslim and Arab environment. Traditionally, they have always relied on an external backer, Israel, the West, even the Syrians, to redress an intrinsic imbalance. Now, with the Israelis going, they are on their own as never before.

There are signs that not merely the Muslim opposition, but the Christian community itself, or growing segments of it, now holds that the diarchic intrusions of its self-appointed saviours is the most dangerous



Muslim fighters take aim with a Russian-made grenade-launcher at a Christian militia post in East Beirut.

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There are signs that not merely the Muslim opposition, but the Christian community itself, or growing segments of it, now holds that the diarchic intrusions of its self-appointed saviours is the most dangerous

enemy. A struggle is under way for the soul of the Christians.

The new refugees are openly cursing their leaders without exception. The Maronite community cannot but be bewildered by discord at the top. Influential voices are being raised against Dr. Geagea and his men, not least those of the old-guard Phalangist leadership, who sometimes speak a language not all that different from the Muslim adversaries.

The party chairman, Dr. Eli Karam, called Dr. Geagea's press conference "a declaration of war." And the Lebanese Forces "keep chopping and changing," he said. "It is indeed the last round of the Lebanese civil war, its end will come. West Beirut hope, when the Maronite Christian camp breaks under the strain, throwing up a new leadership capable of reconciliation with Lebanon's other communities, and opening the way for political reforms that alone can put this shattered country together again."

NEW DELHI: Sikhs killed two Hindus, including the son of a local leader of Mr. Gandhi's party, on Monday night, adding new tension to the Punjab.

Paramilitary reinforcements were rushed to the scene of the killings, in the Hindu-majority northern Punjab town of Dharawal, which was placed under 24-hour curfew.

Police said that reinforcements were called in after Hindus started attacking Sikh shops and pedestrians in retaliation for the murders.

They said that six men shot dead Ramesh Kumar, the son of Ram Laddha, the head of the Dharawal section of the Congress (I) Party, at his farm.

A spate of attacks in the past week has coincided with efforts by Mr. Gandhi to get peace talks started and a split between moderate and militant Sikh political leaders.

In a sign of growing impatience at the stalemate in Punjab, Mr. Gandhi has said that the Government is prepared to take any action necessary to restore peace.

"Some people are feeling that we have become too soft and meek on Punjab. But the way of love does not mean weakness," he told a meeting of Congress (I) members in New Delhi.

His peace efforts have been hampered by a power struggle for control of the Sikh's main political party, the Akali Dal.

The split, between the moderates led by the party president, Baramand Singh Longowal, and the militants, headed by the father of the dead extremist leader, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, has left the Government wondering whom to negotiate with.

Sources said there was growing concern that time was running out for a clear settlement. They noted that the anniversary was approaching of the army's assault on Amritsar's Golden Temple on June 3 last year. — Reuters.

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In the eyes of almost everyone else, this is a sure recipe for Christian suicide. The Maronites, they say, cannot indefinitely defy their Muslim and Arab environment. Traditionally, they have always relied on an external backer, Israel, the West, even the Syrians, to redress an intrinsic imbalance. Now, with the Israelis going, they are on their own as never before.

There are signs that not merely the Muslim opposition, but the Christian community itself, or growing segments of it, now holds that the diarchic intrusions of its self-appointed saviours is the most dangerous

enemy. A struggle is under way for the soul of the Christians.

The new refugees are openly cursing their leaders without exception. The Maronite community cannot but be bewildered by discord at the top. Influential voices are being raised against Dr. Geagea and his men, not least those of the old-guard Phalangist leadership, who sometimes speak a language not all that different from the Muslim adversaries.

The party chairman, Dr. Eli Karam, called Dr. Geagea's press conference "a declaration of war." And the Lebanese Forces "keep chopping and changing," he said. "It is indeed the last round of the Lebanese civil war, its end will come. West Beirut hope, when the Maronite Christian camp breaks under the strain, throwing up a new leadership capable of reconciliation with Lebanon's other communities, and opening the way for political reforms that alone can put this shattered country together again."

NEW DELHI: Sikhs killed two Hindus, including the son of a local leader of Mr. Gandhi's party, on Monday night, adding new tension to the Punjab.

Paramilitary reinforcements were rushed to the scene of the killings, in the Hindu-majority northern Punjab town of Dharawal, which was placed under 24-hour curfew.

Police said that reinforcements were called in after Hindus started attacking Sikh shops and pedestrians in retaliation for the murders.

They said that six men shot dead Ramesh Kumar, the son of Ram Laddha, the head of the Dharawal section of the Congress (I) Party, at his farm.

A spate of attacks in the past week has coincided with efforts by Mr. Gandhi to get peace talks started and a split between moderate and militant Sikh political leaders.

In a sign of growing impatience at the stalemate in Punjab, Mr. Gandhi has said that the Government is prepared to take any action necessary to restore peace.

"Some people are feeling that we have become too soft and meek on Punjab. But the way of love does not mean weakness," he told a meeting of Congress (I) members in New Delhi.

His peace efforts have been hampered by a power struggle for control of the Sikh's main political party, the Akali Dal.

The split, between the moderates led by the party president, Baramand Singh Longowal, and the militants, headed by the father of the dead extremist leader, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, has left the Government wondering whom to negotiate with.

Sources said there was growing concern that time was running out for a clear settlement. They noted that the anniversary was approaching of the army's assault on Amritsar's Golden Temple on June 3 last year. — Reuters.

Gemayel, whom they saw as weak, mercurial, and subservient to the Syrians.

But within six weeks the new saviour of the Christian community and his followers had suffered two military defeats reminiscent of the rout that followed the Israeli withdrawal from the Shouf Mountains in September, 1983.

In the Sidon area, at least, it was the Lebanese Forces' own excesses — six weeks of one-sided shelling of the city — and their precipitated withdrawal which brought calamity upon heads of the Christians they had come to "protect". Yet, no sooner had this happened, than, Dr. Geagea, in a belated attempt to press conference, served notice that, henceforth, the Christians could rely only on their guns. Everything that had been taken by force would be recovered by force.

He denounced almost everyone — not just the Muslims and Druses, but Mr. Gemayel and the Syrians. It was almost as if Dr. Geagea

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Stoppage starts to bite

A FIVE-DAY strike by civil servants hit ordinary Swedes yesterday as fruit and vegetable prices rose and returning holidaymakers were forced to make long coach journeys from other Nordic capitals.

Shopkeepers said that prices of fresh foodstuffs had risen substantially since the 250,000-strong civil servants' union TCOS began selective strikes last Thursday in support of a pay claim, closing airports and virtually paralysing foreign trade.

"Prices of most fruit and vegetables have gone up and they're going to be more and more difficult to get hold of this week," a stallholder, Veli Oksa, said yesterday at Stockholm city-centre market. — Reuters.

Chinese plaudits

The wife of Mr. Hu Yaobang, the reforming Chinese Communist party chief who popularised the wearing of Western suits, yesterday admitted a glittering display of top French fashions by Yves Saint Laurent. "I think at first she was startled, but then she enjoyed herself," the couturier said after Mrs. Hu toured an exhibition of 20 years of Saint Laurent's creations in Peking. — Reuters.

Heart troubles

THE world's longest living artificial heart recipient, William Schroeder, was undergoing tests yesterday to determine if the brain haemorrhage which caused him to be readmitted to a Louisville hospital had stopped, his doctors said. Mr. Schroeder, a retired munitions plant worker, became the second artificial heart patient 164 days ago. — Reuters.

Panama march

ABOUT 6,000 Panamanians marched through the streets of the capital on Monday, accusing the Government of corruption and charging that the military was running the country. Outside the American embassy, the demonstrators protested against what they said was US support for "the fraudulent military regime." — Reuters.



Unity call

A SENIOR Libyan official, Major Abdel-Salam Jalloud (above), who is visiting Khartoum, yesterday called for unity between Sudan and Libya. Major Jalloud, who is leading a 10-man delegation to Sudan, said that Egypt should also be involved. — Reuters.

Sailor held

A BRITISH sailor, Robert Heaton, accused of starting a fire on a freighter which killed three people will soon face charges of arson and probably manslaughter, court officials said yesterday in Taipei. Penalties for arson and manslaughter in Taiwan range from seven years to life imprisonment. — Reuters.

Mengele reward

ISRAEL is offering \$1 million reward for information leading to the capture of the dead death camp doctor, Josef Mengele, a Justice Ministry spokesman said in Jerusalem yesterday. Mengele is accused of participating in the murder of 400,000 Jews during the Second World War. — Reuters.

For the record

THE recently released mercenary leader, Colonel Michael "Mad Mike" Hoare said yesterday in South Africa that most of what had been written about a 1981 coup attempt in the Seychelles was rubbish. He was writing a book to set the record straight. — Reuters.

Moscow visit

THE Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, will pay a five-day visit to the Soviet Union on May 21. Mr. Gandhi will meet the Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, and is expected to discuss a wide range of bilateral and international issues. — AP.

Asylum sought

A SOVIET professor, Mr. Yuri Nagibov, has applied for political asylum in Sweden after defecting from the Soviet Union via Finland. Police said yesterday in Stockholm. — Reuters.

مكتبة الأمل

WHO WILL DECIDE YOUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE?

If you live in Inner London, the answer is not very clear.

Because the proposed abolition of the GLC leaves a question mark over the future of the Inner London Education Authority. And so over the future of London's schools and London's children.

After abolition of the GLC, the Secretary of State will have the power to abolish the ILEA as well.

Without asking Londoners.

And without a new Bill.

We think this uncertainty is bad for ILEA and bad for the Londoners who elected ILEA.

The future of the GLC will be decided in this Parliament.

We think the future of London's education should be decided now as well.

For further information please phone 633 4400.

ANC goes for Iran-style popular uprising in tactics shift

By David Rabin
THE African National Congress has called on South African blacks to prepare for a long general strike, for small armed bands of youths to turn black townships into "no-go" areas for anything less than a huge police contingent, and for black police and soldiers to quit government service.

The new "call" to the nation by the exiled nationalist movement represents an important shift of tactics towards a popular Iran-type insurrection rather than a protracted people's war. The appeal to blacks, issued by the ANC headquarters in Lusaka, is being printed on underground presses in South Africa.

The implications of the call were spelled out in an interview by a Lusaka-based leading member of the ANC's Political Military Council (PMC) the

main body in charge of carrying out underground work in South Africa, he said.

"We believe a very rare combination of revolutionary factors are maturing before our very eyes. If the liberation opposition seizes this very important moment and builds upon it, the prospects of peoples' power is within our grasp... it is not longer a dream," he said.

He stressed that the ANC does not believe that revolution is just around the corner, nor has it abandoned the idea of a long-term struggle. But it believes that events in South Africa in past months, especially the collapse of the administration in black areas and the violent resistance, raise new and different possibilities for revolutionary change.

The seeds of a rare convergence of three factors without

which a society could seldom be changed, were developing in South Africa, he said.

"Firstly, there is a regime and a ruling class in deep economic and political crisis, perhaps the deepest in its history. Secondly, there is the ferment among the people, who are showing that they want not reform but revolutionary solutions. They are demonstrating that they are ready to sacrifice their lives to bring this about and this provides a realistic foundation for transformation. Thirdly, a movement exists with an organised following to guide the build-up towards victory."

He went on: "The call contains new and far-reaching objectives which we believe are now realisable because of the astonishing speed with which the situation is changing. It remains true that the idea of a general insurrection as an immediate way forward cannot

replace the long-term perspective we have of protracted people's war. But we know that history sometimes has a funny way of departing from blueprints. We should certainly keep the lines open to other possibilities which the situation is opening up, particularly in the last three months.

"I believe the possibility of bringing about the collapse of the existing set-up in South Africa through the build-up of insurrectionary factors has never been as great as it is today."

The statement calls for people's committees to be set up as an alternative administration in black townships. It also appeals to black police and soldiers to cross to the black side and urges whites to refuse to serve as conscripts. The ANC believes that these are realistic demands. The

Second death expected to increase township tension

Student dies in custody of SA police

From Patrick Laurence in Johannesburg

A black student leader has died in South African police custody, days after a trade unionist died of injuries apparently received while in police detention at the weekend.

Mr Sipho Mbuli, a branch organiser of the Congress of South African Students, was arrested on May 4 in the Free State provincial town of Odendaarsburg, for questioning on "charges of public violence," police announced yesterday.

While sitting in a chair at the local police station he went into convulsions, a police spokesman said. He was admitted to hospital in Welkom, a nearby mining town, and was then transferred to Bloemfontein, where he died.

A post mortem examination was conducted yesterday by a state pathologist in the presence of another retained by Mr Mbuli's family.

The trade unionist, Mr Andries Raditsela, died on Monday in Soweto's Paragwanathi hospital, where he was admitted after being found lying unconscious at the administrative offices in the East Rand township of Tsakane on Saturday night.

An executive member of the Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu), he had been detained in the township on Saturday in terms of the Internal Security Act, and said all charges against him were withdrawn hours before his death.

An independent pathologist found yesterday that Mr Raditsela died of a "sub-dural (brain) haemorrhage to the right side of his head and that the injury was 'consistent with a trauma'."

The pathologist was unable to establish the cause of the injury, but said it was consistent with either a blow or a fall.

AP adds: A white soldier and four blacks, including a

A post mortem examination was performed in Soweto yesterday by both a state and a private pathologist representing the family.

The deaths and funerals of both men are certain to exacerbate the already volatile situation in black townships. Fosatu has said that "the circumstances of his death are shrouded in suspicion" and demanded that those responsible be brought to justice.

The Commissioner of Police, General Johan Coetzee, has appointed a senior police officer, Brigadier J. J. Viktor, to investigate Mr Raditsela's death as a "matter of urgency."

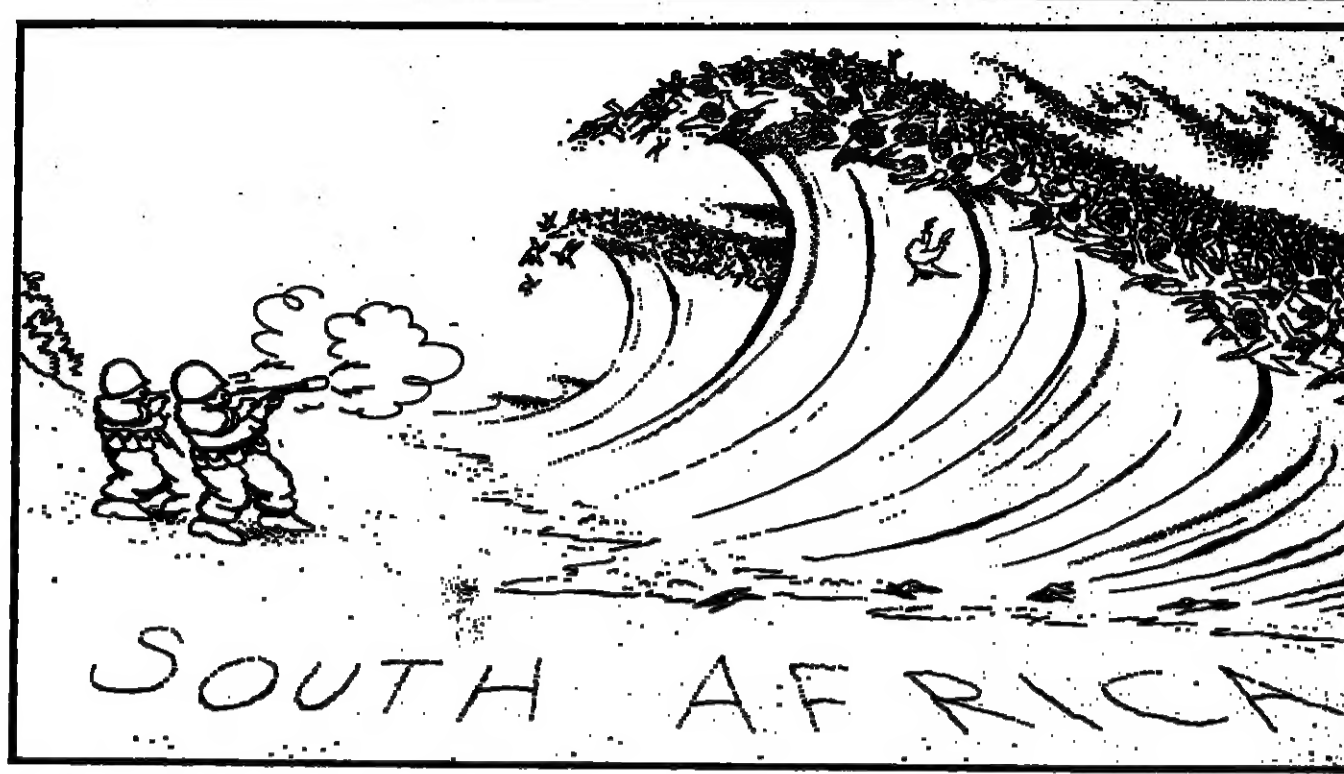
AP adds: A white soldier and four blacks, including a

Violence between members of rival anti-apartheid organisations also continued yesterday. Mr Mandla Mtweni, cultural secretary of the Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo), which espouses the Black Consciousness doctrine, suffered serious burns when a petrol bomb was thrown into the room where he was sleeping in a house east of Johannesburg.

Mr Eric Mphahlele, general secretary of Azapo, said that Mr Mtweni was in hospital with burns.

Azapo and the United Democratic Front are believed to be on the verge of striking a peace pact after weeks of at least one another's members.

Mr Mphahlele was yesterday reluctant to blame the UDF for the attacks. He said, could have been thrown "by a third party trying to jeopardise" the peace plans.



S. Africa migrant workers leave hostel after five days of fighting

From Patrick Laurence in Johannesburg

More than 1,800 migrant workers yesterday left their hostel at the East Rand township of Tsakane after five days of bloody fighting with township residents.

At least 11 people died in running clashes between hostel-based migrants and family-based residents, although unconfirmed reports put the death toll at 18.

The migrant workers left their hostel yesterday following round table talks with Tsakane residents, the Tsakane Community Council, the divisional commissioner of police, and the JPR for Springs, and nearby white-occupied town.

The conflict caused many Tsakane residents to stay away from work in Springs and neighbouring "white" towns in order to protect their homes and children against anticipated further attacks from migrant workers.

The violence was triggered on Saturday when young black militants decided to burn down a beer hall on their way back

from the funeral of an unrest victim.

Beerhalls are seen by black radicals as part of the "oppressive apartheid system" because profits obtained from the sale of liquor are used to finance the controversial government-created township councils.

The Tsakane beerhall is located next to the migrant worker hostel. The migrants objected to plans to burn it down.

According to some Tsakane residents, local police adopted a benevolently neutral attitude toward the first savage foray by the generally conservative migrant workers. But a police spokesman strongly repudiated the accusation, insisting that the police arrested all lawbreakers.

Unrest flared in several black townships yesterday, including Soweto, where two blacks were killed. One of the victims was a young girl run down by a car that went out of control under a hail of stones. A man was killed when police opened fire on a crowd

with small shot and rubber bullets, a police spokesman said.

In Duduza township, east of Johannesburg, a 19-year-old woman died inside a home set alight by rioters throwing petrol bombs, a police spokesman said. A black man was stoned to death in Thabong township outside Welkom in Orange Free State.

A white soldier also died in a head-on collision between two army trucks on riot duty east of Johannesburg. The Government says more than 200 people have been killed in nine months of unrest, but opposition groups say well over 300 have died.

In Thabong township, near Welkom in the Free State, three black town councillors opened fire on a hostile crowd, wounding three black residents. The councillor, assisted by local residents, then arrested 10 of the attackers and handed them over to police.

Police were clearly pleased with the Thabong arrest, seeing it as evidence of the long-awaited backlash by township residents against "anarchy" a

Help for Ghanaian refugees

Lagos: Ghana said it sent buses to the Nigerian border yesterday to pick up some of its citizens as Nigeria came under pressure to extend its Friday deadline for the expulsion of an estimated 700,000 illegal immigrants.

In a broadcast monitored in London, the state-controlled Accra Radio said 10 buses were sent to the Nigeria-Benin frontier to pick up at least a few hundred of the 6,000 deportees reportedly stranded without transport home.

The Organisation of African Trade Union Unity issued a statement at its Accra headquarters appealing to the Nigerian Government to extend the deadline and allow the deportees to take their belongings and money in accordance with international treaties.

The radio claimed that Nigerian border guards had seized money and belongings from deportees, leaving them with only mattresses and personal effects. It said some of the deportees were forced to leave their jobs without getting their salaries.

The Lagos Concord, an independent newspaper, said delays at the Benin border would likely force Nigeria to extend the deadline.

On Wednesday, convoys of up to 100 vehicles at a time crossed into Benin at Kaki and Igbo, most of them aiming to cross Benin and Togo to reach Ghana.

The migrants queued for several hours before being searched by Nigerian troops and customs officials to make sure they were not carrying more than 20 naira (\$17) the law allows.

In Niger, Nigeria's northern neighbour, news reports said migrants were arriving at the Niger-Nigeria border near Sokoto by the hundreds day and night. But there were no official estimates of the number leaving Nigeria, many were believed to be using footpaths to the borders without formalities.

About 300,000 aliens reportedly are from Ghana and 100,000 are from Niger. The remainder are from Togo, Chad, Cameroon and Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta). —AP.

Seven die in Indian violence

New Delhi: Troops restored order to the west Indian city of Ahmedabad yesterday after a night of riots between Hindus and Muslims in which seven people were killed and 20 injured.

An indefinite curfew was in force in the city's old quarter which was hit by violent clashes involving stabbings, shotgun blasts and barrages of acid-filled light bulbs and rocks.

The violence ended a week of calm in Gujarat State where 54 people have been killed in two months of protests against a government policy reserving jobs and college places for lower caste Hindus and other backward economic groups.

Police reinforcements broke up the rioters several times but it was nearly four hours before fighting died down.—Reuter.

New crisis as Kanak MPs quit

Noumea. The constitutional crisis deepened in New Caledonia yesterday when moderate deputies representing indigenous Kanaks walked out of the Territorial Assembly in protest at racial violence in which a youth was shot dead and 95 people were injured.

The six members of the Kanak Socialist Liberation Party said they could no longer govern with the white anti-independence party, which they blamed for the street battles between white settlers and Kanaks in the capital on Wednesday. The Kanak withdrawal leaves the assembly in the hands of the rightwing Gaullist party, which is dominated by white settlers,

'Tanaka paralysed' report as officials say he is recovering

From Robert Whyman in Tokyo

The mystery surrounding the ailing former Prime Minister Mr Tanaka, deepened yesterday, with a report that Japan's most powerful political figure was at home and in poor health.

This conflicted with a statement the same day that Mr Tanaka was in good health and steadily recovering from a cerebral infection suffered in late February. It also contradicted the general belief that he was still in hospital, and added to the uncertainty of whether he could maintain his dominance of Japan's ruling party.

Later the two men, after returning home to Niigata, were reported to have retracted their remarks.

Japan's speculation about the condition of Mr Tanaka, who led Japan in the early 1970s, reached fever pitch this week. On Sunday, his secretary said he had secretly left hospital and returned home for a few days the previous week. The fact that he had eluded the media and TV crews besieging the hospital he entered on February 27 heightened the temperature.

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TV viewers watch bird massacre

Canberra: The bird-trapper Ray Ackroyd dumped 200 dead cockatoos on the lawn of Parliament House yesterday, after horrified viewers watched him bludgeoned them to death on television.

Mr Ackroyd said that his protest was to press for a change in the law to allow the export of live birds to stop them being slaughtered by farmers.

"I think it's the most despicable act of cruelty anyone has ever had to do," he told reporters.

He was shown on television in the Australian bush crushing the birds' heads with a block of wood as they struggled under a net. The method of killing is legal as long as the birds die instantly.

Mr Ackroyd last night had his trappers' licence revoked by the National Parks and Wildlife Service, pending an investigation into his methods.

"The way he kills the birds is legal as long as he kills them once," according to a spokesman for the Animal Welfare League. "It's only if

he hits them twice it becomes illegal."

A government spokesman said that laws preventing the export of live birds would not be changed, because it was impossible to capture the large numbers necessary to solve farmers' problems.

Mr Ackroyd said that farmers killed crop-eating birds by slow poisoning, and that clobbering them once with a solid block was more humane, because they died within two minutes.

The trapper said that his licence had allowed him to snare almost a million birds a year, most of which he set free and some of which he kept for sale to pet shops.

The country's main animal welfare body, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, has long been a supporter of the export of live birds. —Reuter.

● Mr Ackroyd, with his pet cockatoo, at Parliament House, Canberra. The bodies of other cockatoos he has slaughtered lie behind him.

Washington secrets provide new hope for painter 30 years on death row

From our Correspondent in Tokyo

Each dawn for the past 30 years, Sadamichi Hirasawa has wondered if he would be taken out and executed for a crime he insists he did not commit.

Now, for the first time, the immediate threat of the gallows has retreated following the transfer of the 58-year-old former painter from death row in his prison in northern Japan to a medical detention centre on Tokyo's outskirts for a check-up.

Yesterday, in his first meeting with a judge in 30 years, he said: "I hope I will be released as soon as possible."

Hirasawa's lawyers have appealed for his release, arguing that the 30-year statute of limitations for carrying out the death penalty had expired. They have also filed his 17th application for retrial.

Hirasawa, in Japan's most celebrated post-war murder case, was sentenced to death after being convicted of poisoning 16 Tokyo bank employees in 1948 and then robbing the bank.

The culprit, posing as a health official, persuaded the bank staff to swallow what he said was anti-dysentery medicine. The man got away with cash and cheques as the victims writhed in agony, and 12 died of cyanide poisoning.

Seven months later, Hirasawa, a well-known painter, was arrested and confessed to the crime. But in court he retracted the confession, which he claimed police extracted under torture.

Hirasawa's defence lawyers say the real murderer was a member of the former Imperial Japanese Army's chemical warfare unit.

Documents, recently unearthed in Washington archives show clearly that police believed the murderer was an army poison expert from a top-secret chemical warfare laboratory.

The men who were held for 15 minutes during the week-end incident in Sydney before being released, were apparently mistaken for police playing the part of terrorists in the exercise, which involved state police and the crack Special Air Services regiment.

Unfortunately for the anti-terrorist squad, one of the men, Mr Peter Ballard, was a solicitor. He complained to his local MP, Mr Peter Baldwin, who then wrote a letter of protest to the Defence Minister, Mr Kim Beazley.

The exercise involved the simulated seizure of a ship loaded with uranium moored in Sydney harbour.

A year ago, workers on a Bass Strait oil rig claimed that they were terrorised by SAS troopers.

Law and disorder

From Richard Yallop in Melbourne

The latest in a series of bungles by Australia's anti-terrorist forces led to two innocent passers-by being seized at gunpoint in the street and interrogated by masked security men on a training exercise.

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Suicide bomber kills three

Tel Aviv: Three people were killed in an apparent suicide bombing yesterday, when a suitcase packed with explosives and carried by a woman blew up near the entrance to Israel's security zone in southern Lebanon, an Israeli military source said.

The source said that troops of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army spotted the woman with the suitcase approaching their checkpoint at 10.30 a.m. on Tuesday. She was carrying a bag which they searched, when they approached her, the suitcase exploded, killing the woman, one soldier, and his wife.

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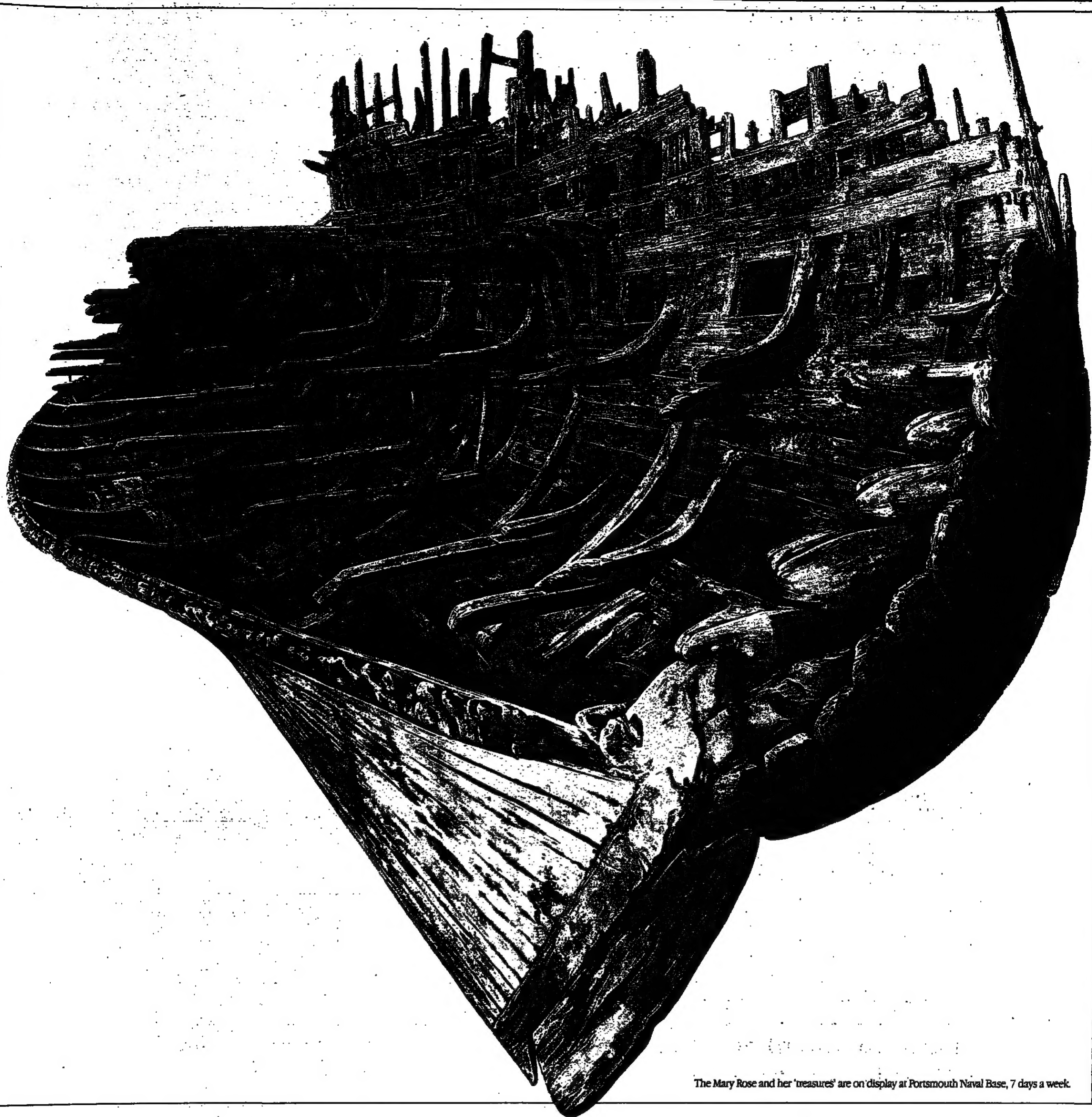
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The Mary Rose and her 'treasures' are on display at Portsmouth Naval Base, 7 days a week.

AT LEAST SHE'LL STAY IN BETTER SHAPE OVER THE NEXT 500 YEARS.

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A deep scourpit was eroded on the port side of the hull.

The currents then relentlessly shrouded her in a thick layer of silt.

By the early eighteenth century a hard layer of shelly clay had sealed the once proud warship in her watery grave.

On October 11th 1982, a salvage operation on a scale never before attempted brought the forlorn remains of the Mary Rose to the surface.

Not only the hull, but a host of precious artefacts that tell of life in Tudor England were rescued from the muddy sea-bed. But in the process of drying them out they could easily be harmed or destroyed.

In order to preserve them, we gave the Mary Rose Trust a chemical solution called polyethylene glycol. Once these items (such as wooden bowls and leather shoes) have been soaked in this solution, they undergo a freeze-drying process that

will carefully preserve them for posterity.

At the same time, the bulk of the hull is sprayed with water to stop it from drying out, and to prevent microbiological decay.

After two years of this treatment a lengthy round-the-clock spraying of an ethylene glycol will begin, before the hull is left to dry out.

The whole process to preserve the Mary Rose will take about twelve or fifteen years to complete.

But in the extraordinary life history of the Mary Rose that's just a drop in the ocean.

YOU CAN BE SURE OF SHELL



Britain to back renewal of MFA, says Channon

TRADE

By Alan Travis

The Trade Minister, Mr Paul Channon, yesterday announced that the British Government will next year seek the renewal of the Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA), which protects EEC markets from Third World imports of textiles and clothing.

Mr Channon said during a Commons debate on the MFA that it would be quite wrong to end 10 years of protection of the British textile and clothing industries with a sudden jolt.

A further period of protection would give the British industries time to establish their international competitiveness, not only against developing countries, but also against the developed nations.

The British Government is the first of all the signatories to the MFA to indicate its position on whether the agreement should be renewed when it expires at the end of July, 1986.

The MFA is under attack from supplying countries such as Hong Kong, South Korea and India, who want it ended next year.

An independent report, the Filbertson report, has estimated that 50,000 jobs could be lost in this country by ending the MFA. But it said that the agreement raised the price of clothing in this country by about 5 per cent and argued that ending the MFA would lead to a net gain in jobs as consumers would have more money to spend on other goods.

Mr Channon acknowledged the agreement at the Bonn summit and that any renewal of the MFA would be a transitional measure.

"Some of our European Community partners may press for a prior commitment that thereafter all special restrictions on textile and clothing trade would come to an end. I think it would be premature to give such a commitment unconditionally at this stage, because it is a matter that will have to be negotiated in the coming round of talks on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade," he said.

He said that there would have to be other more liberal arrangements than the present ones and some quotas should be dispensed with.

"I accept indications that the restrictions have borne especially heavily on the price of children's clothes, and we shall be seeking to liberalise these where administratively practical."

The announcement was greeted with cheers and relief by many of the MPs in the chamber. More than 30 members, many of them from Yorkshire, Humberside and the East Midlands, where the textile, clothing and knitwear industries are concentrated, had put down their names to speak in the debate.

It is sadly typical of the Transport Secretary that, having flouted the law on the

Powell measure looks doomed

By Colin Brown

VIRTUALLY the last chance of Mr Enoch Powell's private bill to ban experiments on embryos reaching the statute book disappeared yesterday with the defeat of Miss Janet Fookes, the Tory MP for Plymouth Drake, to drop her own bill in the Commons today.

Miss Fookes said that she had not been approached by Mr Powell's supporters but although she supported his bill she would not make way for it by removing from the list in the Commons her own measure to outlaw kerb-crawling.

The bill's supporters yesterday tabled a Commons motion supported by 108 MPs, including the Liberal chief whip, Mr Alan Beith, urging the Government to enable the remaining stages of the bill to be given the necessary time to pass through the Commons.

The Leader of the House, Mr John Biffen, who also supports the bill, has made it clear, along with the Prime Minister, that this would be a breach with convention.

GLC bill—new defeat

HOUSE OF LORDS

By our Political Staff

THE HOUSE OF LORDS last night rejected an appeal by the Environment Minister, Lord Elton, and inflicted a third embarrassing defeat on the Government on the Local Government Bill, which will abolish the Greater London Council and the six metropolitan county councils.

Peers rejected plans to hand waste disposal functions over to the successor borough and district councils and by 170 to 166 (majority 4) scrapped a whole clause from the bill.

Conservative backbencher, the Earl of Cranbrook, suggested non-elected city-wide authorities for London and the counties should deal with commercial and hazardous waste disposal.

The defeat is yet another serious blow to the Govern-

ment, which has been marshalling supporters this week in a bid to avoid further embarrassments over the bill. Without a vote, peers agreed to the establishment of a new body — the London Waste Disposal Authority — to take over the functions.

The Lords have already thrown out plans to hand over the highway and nature conservancy functions to the lower tier authorities — in favour of new strategic bodies to run the services.

Last night peers from all sides of the House voiced fears over the handling of waste in the capital and the large provincial cities, after abolition. There was concern that the government proposals involved voluntary arrangements, rather than compulsory powers.

Lord Cranbrook, chairman of a Lords Select Committee on science and technology, which rejected the Government plans over waste, said: "This is essentially a func-

tion of local government, and should not be split up between the councils." Lord Elton said: "We are not in the business of creating a lesser form of the authorities. We are now abolishing the GLC and the MCCs, which this House has already decided."

Mr John Gunnell, the leader of West Yorkshire Council and spokesman for the metropolitan councils, said after the vote: "It is another good result fitting into the pattern in which the Lords usually want to retain the services of the Metropolitan Counties and county-wide services."

This vote was a direct result of the select committee's findings, which led to Greater London Council and West Yorkshire and finding out what really was.

Ministers do not regard these as overriding issues. They are not as serious as the issues of housing, health and education, which are the main areas of concern.



Lord Elton: appeal failed to win the day.

been devolved to the district councils, the Government will face serious problems with the emasculated bill.

Ridley drops controversial Civil Aviation Bill

AIRPORTS

By Alan Travis

The Transport Secretary, Mr Nicholas Ridley, faced renewed embarrassment last night when he announced his decision to drop the controversial civil aviation bill, through a writ-

ten Commons answer.

The bill was to give the Government power to restrict air traffic movements at Heathrow to 275,000 a year.

Mr Ridley had already been forced to delay debate on the bill when more than 100 Conservative MPs staged a rebellion last November in the belief that it would pre-empt a

decision on Stansted airport.

In a written reply to Mr Fergus Montgomery, the Conservative MP for Alton, Mr Ridley said that Heathrow in time for a Civil Aviation Bill to complete all

the Stansted and the fifth transport spokesman, protested

in the Commons that the man-

ner of the announcement was a gross discourtesy to the Commons. The committee exam-

ining the bill was to meet next week and had not yet been told of the decision to drop the bill. Mr Snape accused Mr Ridley of attempting to sneak through decisions by using

written Commons answers.

NEXT WEEK

Move to amend Rent Act

By Colin Brown

MR MICHAEL Mates, a senior Conservative backbencher, will be attempting to change the law on the right of householders to claim back their property from their tenants when they return from abroad with a private bill in the Commons on Tuesday.

The bill to amend the Rent Act after a case in his Hampshire East constituency is likely to secure all-party backing and should reach the statute book, provided that there are no attempts to block it. It will overturn a judgment in the House of Lords denying a family the right to take over their house from tenants who took their letting from an agency rather than direct from the family.

Another Private Member's Bill is likely to cause a stir on Wednesday because it will be accompanied by a mass lobby of Parliament by young people. The bill, by Liberal MP, Mr



Mr Richard Ottaway

Clement Freud, is one of a series of measures by the Liberals on Youth policy which include votes for 16-year-olds. Mr Freud's measure will help the young handicapped.

Liberal peers have chosen for their debate on Wednesday the topical subject of postal ballots for trade union elections. So far, the independent peer Lord (Frank) Chapple has not put his name down to speak.

The controversy over the

National Council for Civil Liberties is likely to dominate the debate on civil liberties initiated on Monday by the Tory backbencher, Mr Richard Ottaway (Nottingham N). The Liberal spokesman, Mr Alex Carlile, decided not to resign from the council because he believes it is more important to stay to get rid of the block vote within the NCCL and to write into its constitution the need to include in British law the European Convention on Human Rights.

The recently formed Commons all-party race relations group, chaired by Clare Short, the Labour MP for Ladywood, may choose to raise the criticism it made yesterday of the Home Office rules on immigration marriage. They protested that many genuine couples were being separated by the rules.

PM's QUESTIONS

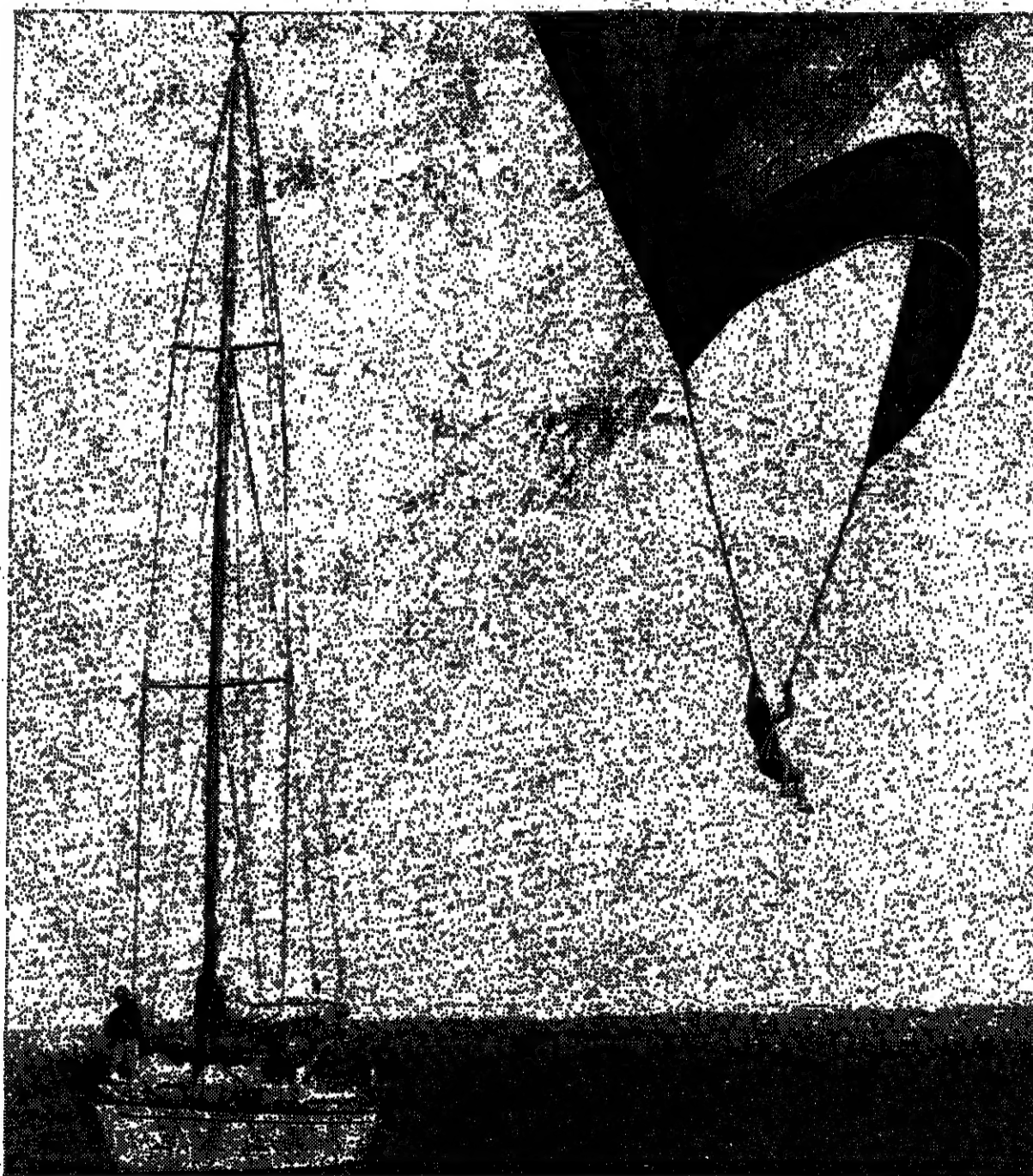
Jobs: only answer

THE Prime Minister insisted in the Commons yesterday that there was "no other answer" to Britain's unemployment problem than the creation of more small businesses.

Over-manning was not the answer to the problem. Mrs Thatcher declared in response to Question time criticism from Labour's Mr Ray Powell (Ogmore).

Tory MPs were as anxious as any others to increase the number of jobs, said Mrs Thatcher. But she added: "They do not come merely by sharing out the number of jobs among more people, because that of course would mean lowering the wage as one increased the number of employed. I do not believe that over-manning is the answer to our problems."

The answer came from "increasing the numbers of small businesses and thereby increasing the numbers of businesses that can expand and take on more people." To Labour protests, she added: "There is no other answer in the long run to getting more jobs."



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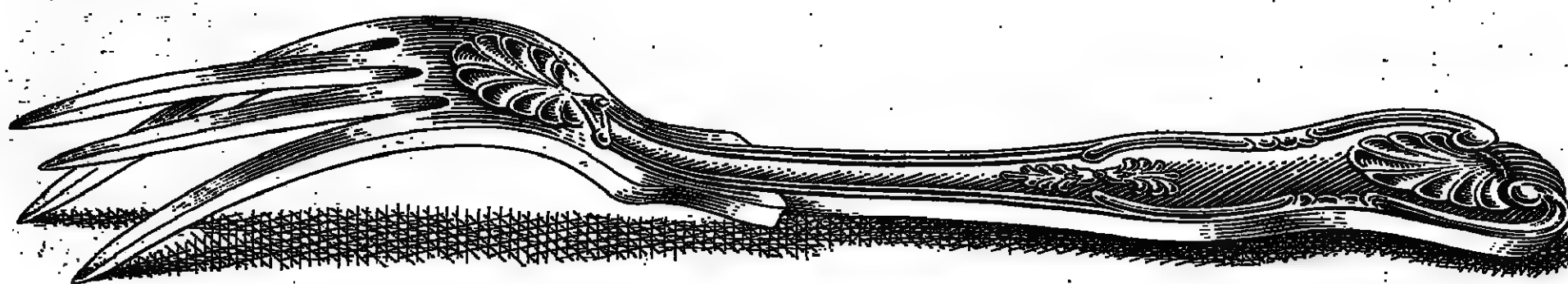
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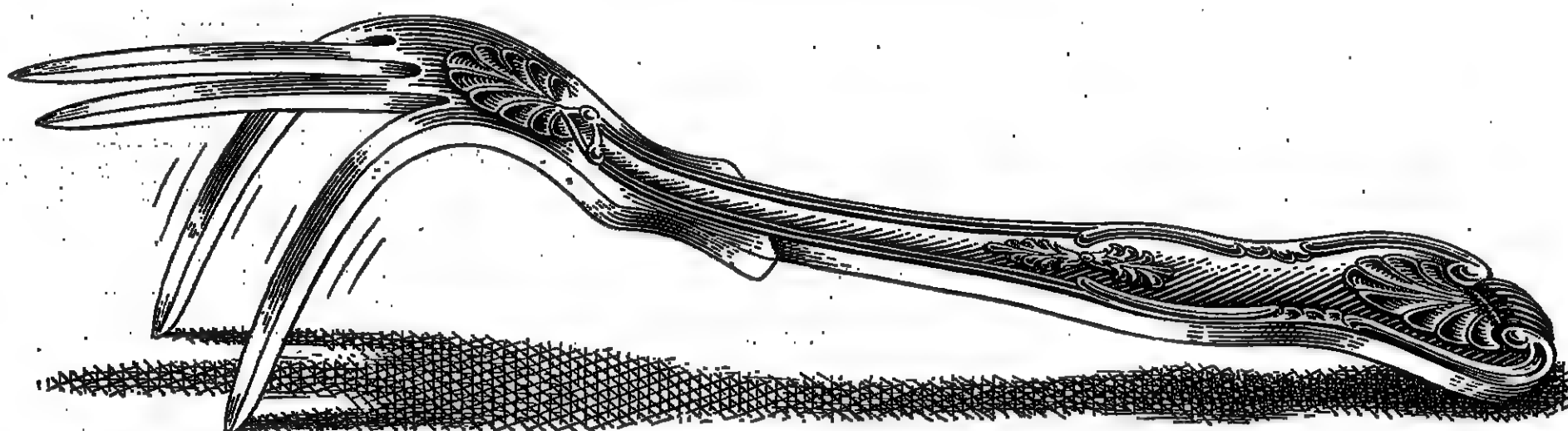
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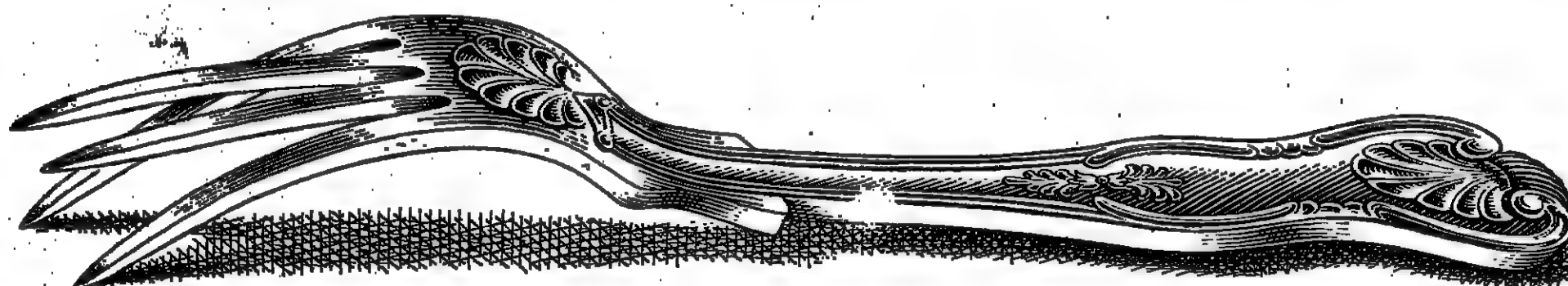
Anton Mosimann on



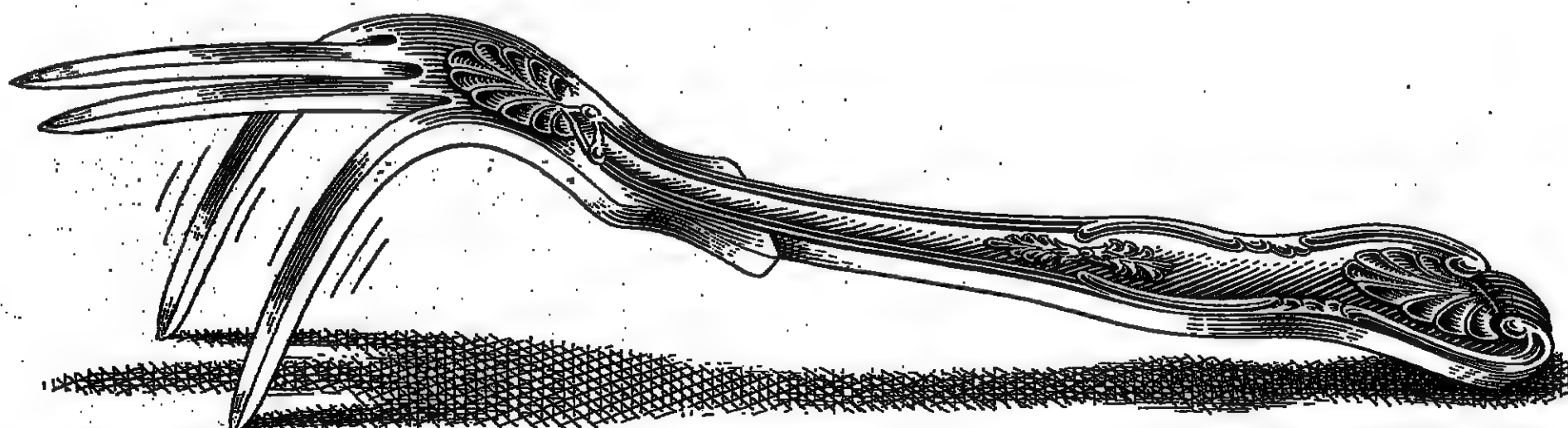
eating well



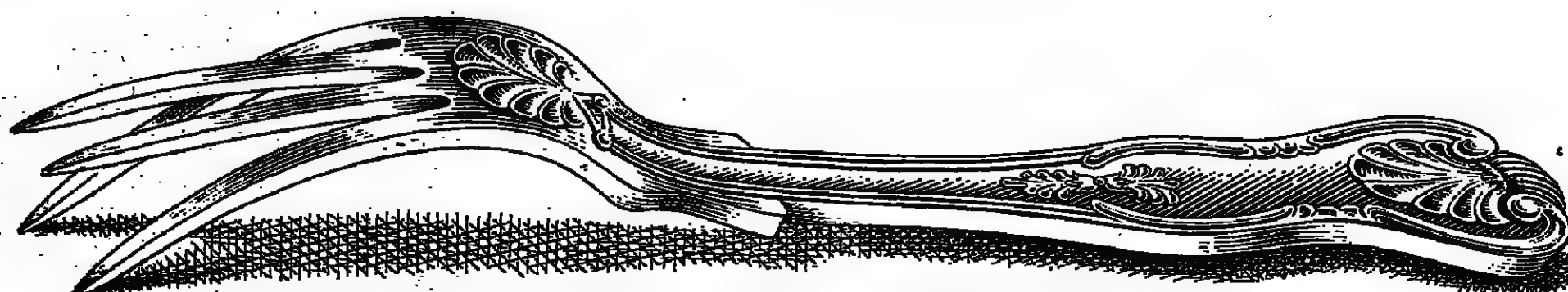
and feeling better.



Starting this Sunday



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W. J. Weatherby in New York describes how two uncompromising dramas, about the AIDS epidemic, have succeeded where traditional Broadway fare has failed

The end of the heart's immunity

Ben Vereen and Leilani Jones in *Grind* (left); Brad Davis and D. W. Moffett in *The Normal Heart* (right).

THE AIDS epidemic is now the topic of two outstanding and completely different dramas in New York, and both critics and theatre-goers have so far responded in a way that recognises their importance.

At the same time that Larry Kramer's fiercely polemical *The Normal Heart* was opening at the Public Theatre, William M. Hoffman's much more intimate *As Is* was transferring from a brief run at off-Broadway's Circle Rep to a mainstream Broadway theatre, a rare commercial tribute to such an uncompromising controversial drama.

As Is concerns a young homosexual suffering from AIDS—Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome—who is deserted by his relatives but not by his ex-lover. Short, almost documentary scenes quickly evoke the risks of casual sex encounters in bars, houses, bars and cheap hotels, and then the pay-off comes with the fatal diagnosis, desperate therapy sessions and eventually the final hospital seclusion.

It sounds forbidding, but the relationship between the con-

demned victim and his ex-lover, who might have been expected to turn his back but didn't, is touching, tender and even funny, and very cleverly played by Jonathan Hogan and Jonathan Hadary. AIDS becomes the key to revealing the meaning of loyalty and even love, the difference between family and friends, and how fear can blind us to the essentials of life.

Kramer's *The Normal Heart* is at the opposite theatrical extreme, putting AIDS centre stage in the way only a frankly polemical drama can do and keeping it there right to the end. It is an angry attack on pretty well everything, notably government, medical and media establishments for their inadequate response, especially in the early days of the epidemic. "There's not a good word to be said about anyone's behaviour in the whole mess," states one character, obviously summing up the author's own opinion.

Being a New York play, it is particularly hard on the local Manhattan media. When *The Normal Heart* was published, it was largely favourable review by

its often devastating drama critic, Frank Rich, the paper added a postscript defending itself against the play's charges that it had suppressed news about AIDS, claiming that its substantial story on July 3, 1981, made the paper "one of the first—if not the first—national news media to alert the public to the scientific recognition and spread of the disease." New York's Mayor Koch, who is also criticised in the play, said he hadn't seen it but hoped it was as good as *As Is*, which was "superb."

The Normal Heart's accusations, expressed with a mounting rage that occasionally verges on hysteria, are conveyed through a homosexual activist played with powerful conviction by Brad Davis. Mr Kramer himself was a founder of the Gay Men's Health Crisis organisation and broke away after disputes about political tactics. All the disputes are dramatised through his activist hero. Most important probably is his appeal to cut down on sexual activity rather than risk getting AIDS, which is eloquently opposed on the

grounds that it negates the hard-fought battles for the freedom to practise homosexual love openly.

"AIDS is not a civil rights issue but a contagion issue," argues Mr Kramer's hero, who finds that his old battles against prejudice were easy compared with his struggle against the timidity of his peers. He falls in love with a New York Times reporter who is depicted as a liberal unsure how far to come out of the closet (the Times critic described him as a "weakling") but found him as the most complex and moving character. Their love scenes are rather lifeless, but their relationship does dramatise Mr Kramer's main argument more subtly than the other characters who tend to be caricatures or mere symbols.

With a striking set that includes a list of the dead American victims state by state, *The Normal Heart* is often strident and repetitious, more editorial than drama, but its high seriousness and urgency, underlined by frightening glimpses of AIDS at work,

overcome any theatrical shortcomings and make it in its very different way as effective as the much more personal and appealing *As Is*.

With *Blondie*, *Harlequin*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and *Pack of Lies*, Hoffman's play is on the short list for a Tony award for best play of the season just ending. There is talk, however, of not awarding a Tony for best musical this year. It was hoped two late comers—*Grind* with Ben Vereen and *Big River* based on Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*—would save this poor musical season. Both are well worth a visit, but exciting, original musicals they are not.

Grind as directed by Harold Prince tries to work on so many levels that its character and appeal are confused. The setting is both on stage and behind the scenes at a Chicago burlesque theatre during the Depression. Racial segregation is booming so the dances on stage hide much backstage bitterness and heartbreak. Add an IRA character with a guilt complex and you have a complex brew for a popular musical.

The book and music are adequate but not memorable, so the main burden falls on the players. Mr Vereen is never less than pleasing as actor, singer and dancer, but he is at his best when he is allowed to portray character and not left to try to carry the whole show himself.

Stubby Kaye, who made his name as Nicely Nicely in *Guy and Dolls*, portrays an ageing comic who has problems finding an enduring stogie. He, too, is expected to carry more of the show than he should, but he is very welcome whenever he appears, though he deserves more help from the writers than he gets.

Grind, with its slack pacing, gives an impression of opening too soon before its outstanding problems were solved, but it deserves credit for dealing entertainingly and frankly with the racial scene, a topic that popular musicals generally avoid like the plague—or AIDS.

That brings us to the last new musical of the Broadway season. *Big River* has tuneful country music by Roger Miller, vigorous direction by Des

McAnuff, and some attractive performers. What it lacks is Twain's genius which kept his narrative going strong from beginning to end whereas *Big River* sagged mid-way. This is not the exciting new musical Broadway awaits impatiently, but it is a pleasant evening if you like masterpieces brought down to a charming, unchallenging level.

Adaptations are probably condemned to being second-rate, but in a season in which *Leader of the Pack* on its 25th performance became the longest-running new musical, *Big River* has received a hearty welcome than perhaps it really merits. One of the recent casualties was a revival of *Take Me Along*, the 1959 musical based on O'Neill's only comedy. Ah! Wilderness! It closed immediately after opening night and this was interpreted as meaning the well-made musical of the Fifties were doomed in the Eighties. But, in fact, this revival was an inferior production with no star names and that explains its failure. Broadway has a high standard as regards style if not content.

Stephen Bierley meets a sporting playwright

Golden track record

THE first time Louise Page went to the theatre she was taken to see Noddy. "I hadn't read the books, but they had his car on the stage. It was wonderful. I don't think I had ever seen a car indoors before."

It was a potent image in her own plays she delights in bringing the outdoors indoors. *Golden Girls*, currently running at The Pit, reaches its climax with the final of a women's 4 x 100 metres relay race. It has been known, as Miss Page has seen herself, "to have a couple of 60-year-old ladies leaping out of their seats and cheering."

For a play that she "expected to be shut down in flames" *Golden Girls* has proved a great success. Performances in London are "virtually sold out, and it has been enthusiastically greeted in Leeds. A radio version is also in the pipeline."

It is Miss Page's first "big play," commissioned by the Royal Shakespeare Company. Spear ratters and ladies-in-waiting found themselves thrust into a world of tortured training, especially the five leading ladies who make up the relay team.

"The physio's been working overtime at the Barbican," said Miss Page, with perhaps a hint of relief.

The ideas germinated in the early Eighties at the time of the Moscow Olympics when she became fascinated with athletics. But, she says, it is a play about "ambition and hypocrisy." "When Dorcas speaks of her ambitions as a runner, I just wrote about my feelings towards writing."

Golden Girls has taken over her life this year. Now she is about to buy a small house in Derbyshire and, between working at the Royal Opera, get down to completing other projects. Her only real regret about the play is that the RSC, on its transfer from Stratford, would not use a re-written version which has been running in Leeds.

The sporting theme is due to crop up again soon. Miss Page has completed the first part of what she hopes will be a series for Central Television centred on a women's soccer team.

"I'm not really interested in star roles—I like to work in group theatre." This is what has drawn her to the sporting arena, not sport as such. "The nearest I get to it is swimming at lengths of the local pool."

Other works on the go include a new version of *Beauty and the Beast* for this Christmas, a play about the North-South divide for the Royal Court called *Hawks and Doves*, and a musical in collaboration with Liza Sells, who composed the sound tapes for *Golden Girls*.

Hawks and Doves will be a thriller, which she likens loosely to David Copperfield. She wants to write about the split in British society and, like her other plays, it will have a strong narrative. "I'm not interested in the agit-prop stuff of the Seventies."

She delights in the thought of all those opening nights. "I know I should admit to loving them. It's the first read-through. I can't stand it. I just want to say 'thank you very much and goodbye'."

BRIEFING

THEATRE

ROBIN Phillips's production of *Antony and Cleopatra* opens at Chichester. Diana Rigg, Denis Quillan, Norman Rodway star. Kenneth Branagh plays the title role in *Adrian Noble's* production of *The Tragedy of Hamlet* at the Barbican and Robert Holman's. Today comes into *The Pit* directed by Bill Alexander with Penny Downie and Roger Allam among the cast. Alfred Fagon's *Lonely Cowboy* bows at The Tricycle, directed by Nicola Kent. David Thacker's production of *Messiah* For Messiahs opens at the Young Vic with Peter Guinness and Margot Leicester.

Innes's *The Bald Prima Donna* and O'Connell's *A Time Story* arrive at the Almeida from the Leicester Haymarket Studio. The National Youth Theatre present Roger Steffert's *Tomorrow, Just You Wait* and see at the Imperial War Museum as part of the V6 Festival.

Recommended
Pravda (Olivier, Monday to Thursday). Brecht and Hare's brilliant comedy about Fleet Street's capitulation to a South African tycoon. Anthony Hopkins brilliant as the rapacious hero.
Tom and Viv (Royal Court). Tom's cold in Michael Hastings's compassionate view of T. S. Eliot's first marriage. Julie Covington beautifully brittle as Viv.
Michael Billington



Kenneth Branagh as Henry V

OPERA

TWO important new productions. *Figaro* (Cardiff) Tuesday, tomorrow week. Tuesday week marks the return of exciting new production. Romanian producer, Lucian Finelli, to Welsh National Opera after his extraordinary M-A-S-H-hit *Carmen*. Again the designers are Raduza and Mituna. Secure and the results can be guaranteed not to please the fogies.
Michael Tippett gets the care and attention his 80th year

"42ND STREET HAS A RIVAL"
Daily Mail

"ME AND MY GIRL"
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deserves with David Pountney's no-expense-spared new staging of *The Midsummer Marriage* (Coliseum Wednesday, tomorrow week. Friday week designed by Stefanos Lazaridis and conducted by Mark Elder. The G.O.M.'s magical psycho-myth has Helen Field and John Treleaven as the central couple. Lesley Garret and Malvina Davies as their working-class Papageno equivalents, and Anthony Raffell as the wicked capitalist King Fisher.

The WNO revive their John Cooley staging of *Tosca* (Cardiff next Friday, Wednesday week) with Josephine Barrow as the diva, Kristian Johansson as her Mario and Anthony Baldwin as Scarpio. Graegor Nowak conducts.

Recommended
Orlando (Glasgow tomorrow, Tuesday, Thursday). Christopher Fettes's magical and original treatment of Handel's great magic opera, conducted by Richard Hickox, with James Bowman, Eiddwen Harrhy, Lillian Watson heading the cast.
Madam Butterfly (Coliseum Tuesday, next Friday). The searing theatricality of Graham Vick's astonishing and unusual staging, led by Janice Cairn's intense and moving *Butterfly*. Tom Sutcliffe

DANCE

MERCE Cunningham and his Dance Company with John Cage return to Sadler's Wells on Tuesday for their 21st anniversary London season which runs until June 23. The four programmes include no fewer than seven British premieres, none of them to be missed. Programme 1 is now changed to *Duets*, *Pictures* and *Locals*; Programme 2 on Wednesday is *Twins*, *2 Phases*, *Redrum*, *name* and *Programme 3* on Friday next is *Doubles*, *Quartet* and *Pictures*.

The Cunningham season is part of the Arts Festival celebrating at the Bloomsbury Theatre from Monday (until June 1) with *A Bite Of The Big Apple*.

Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet celebrates the Royal Opera House until the end of next week. They dance *The Sleeping Beauty* tomorrow night; *Swan Lake* next Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday; the triple bill of *Les Sylphides*, *Petrushka* (with Lusting) and *Cherès* next Wednesday.

Glasgow's Mayfest presents the 1st Ball Dancers from Chicago in their European premiere at the Mitchell Theatre next Thursday. All Mayfest events from 041-357 3450.

ROCK

Colour Field: Cardiff University (tomorrow), Leeds University (Saturday). Chippinham Goldiggers (Monday), and Manchester Hacienda (Thursday). The drab dopey voice of ex-Special Terro Hall finds a new home in the folkie sandpools of *Virgins* and *Philistines*.

Working Week: Dundee University (tonight), Leeds Warehouse (Sunday). Instigators of loose movement known as Soul Jazz. Simon Booth's group is big on stylish, big-band arrangements, small on Sade—quality songs.

Richard Thompson's Band: Workshop Bataclan Centre (tonight), Southport Arts Centre (Saturday). A master of tuneful, respectable self-pity plays his bitter folk rock. Dire Straits want the vulgar romanticism.

WITH the death of George Balanchine it has become very clear that Merce Cunningham is now the dominating force in American dance. Apart from Twyla Tharp, no choreographer on this side of the Atlantic shows a comparable originality or refinement of style. To see Cunningham's excellent company in an extended and like that just finished at the New York City Centre Theatre is to have one's ideas about space, time and elegance—the ability to surprise us into an awareness of the body's capacity for beauty—restored, even fortified, readjusted.

What Cunningham does with steps and with those extended passages of stillness that both link and give emphasis to so many of his dance phrases is, in effect, to help us "see" our eyes and, by extension, our feelings. No one in the audience at City Centre was likely to forget in a hurry the impact of his current repertory, especially the works being given in New York for the first time: *Doubles*, *Phases* and *Native Green*, the latter a world premiere and one of Cunningham's most typical and illuminating inventions.

Describing Cunningham's works is among the hardest tasks a writer can take on. Cunningham provides his audiences with nothing but the experience of dance itself—that is, of movement in time and space—without anything of an extraneous nature to modify the challenge: no stories, no themes, no arguments, no ideas, not even a clear visual counter-part to a well-loved piece of music. In his repertory, for example, there is not a single work that enables one to agonise along with the dancers as they try to body forth the yearnings expressed in, say, a symphony by Gustav Mahler.

While it is true that Cunningham is the means by which the public can hear a great deal of fascinating music in the time-honoured way of more conventional choreographers. For Cunningham music is an adjunct to the performance of dance, not a source of its form or its style. In similar fashion, the costumes, sets and lighting are also adjuncts. None plays a determinative role in the

Dale Harris hails the Merce Cunningham company which opens at Sadler's Wells on Tuesday

Dancing to the music of time

Merce Cunningham (right) and his company in *Pictures* (below)



creation of a Cunningham ballet. Each is, rather, a means of aesthetic enrichment.

Apart from the need to agree about the basic circumstances of a piece—how long it lasts, the number of performers it requires, the nature of the space in which it is to be shown—Cunningham offers his collaborators complete freedom. In other words, he allows them the opportunity to create exactly as they want to in their own particular field without any need to refer to what the other participants in the enterprise are up to.

For that reason, perhaps, the term collaborators is less apt than partners. There is no evidence that any of the



several arts that comprise a Cunningham ballet is subversive in any other that, for example, the designer of the decor and costumes is interpreting the nature of the choreography and is therefore its humble servant.

There is even less evidence that the choreographer is in any way interpreting the music. Instead of a visualisation of, or a comment upon, a piece of music, Cunningham offers his audience a concert of essentially autonomous sounds—almost invariably electronic these days and usually played by the composer—at the same time that the dancing to which the music deliberately bears no kinetic or interpretive relationship, is taking place.

do not have in, say, *Phases*, where the athleticism is emphasised by sleek, brilliantly coloured tights—until, that is, they put on extraneous clothing, in some cases sweaters in others leg warmers. In yet others leather belts, as if they were dressing up for a party.

There is no doubt, too, that the character of the music plays a similar role in affecting our response to what we are looking at, even when the combination is essentially arbitrary. In *Native Green*, the music by John King (Gliss in Signs), which sounds like the workings of a textile mill as heard through a half-closed door, creates an aural landscape of dream-like impersonality. In *Pictures*, on the other hand, the music by David Behrman (*Interspecies Smalltalk*) is dominated by the plaintive emotive sound of an amplified violin—the result being that the dancers' movements take on a strange and haunting poignancy.

All these ballets—as well as *Trails*, *Inlets 2* and *Quartet*, which the company will be bringing to London for the first time next week—are primarily studies in movement. They are also studies in relationships, and, as such, infinitely subtle and suggestive. They are, in addition, thanks to Cunningham's superb company, wonderfully vivid.

This season Helen Barrow, Alan Good, Catherine Kerr, Robert Swinston and Megan Walker have particularly distinguished themselves. And once again Chris Komar has shown himself to be among the finest dancers of our time. But the most amazing of them all is Cunningham himself. Now almost 66, he only appears in certain works, and then briefly. Whenever he does, however, it is like a visitation from a great philosopher, whose every gesture bespeaks profound, hard-won wisdom.

And whether or not the costumes are conceived in virtually complete independence of Cunningham's intentions, the manner in which the dancers are clothed inevitably produces a specific effect. In *Native Green*, for example, the fact that the women wear white tights overlaid with white skirts gives them a femininity they

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DIARY

THE British School of Motorists' enormous donation to the Liberal—the biggest ever given to a British political party—has sent opponents scuttling back to the Department of Trade report into the involvement of its chairman, Anthony Jacobs, in the Ozald Group in the early Seventies.

The investigation cleared Mr Jacobs, but was highly critical of an anti-competition arrangement he was involved in when he threatened to leave the company. It speaks of a "sham agreement... a cynical disregard of the need for frankness" and of a transaction that was "unattractive and unacceptable." But a colleague in the scheme, singled out for criticism, later went with Mr Jacobs to BSM, was a co-director with him of two other companies.

In 1972, Mr Jacobs failed to be appointed MD of Ozald and decided to hit back by forming with his cousin, Mr M. Miller, a competing company in South Africa, with a holding company in Liechtenstein. When the latter was set up in July 1972, Ozald offered Mr Jacobs £100,000 to buy them off. This sum was hidden in Ozald's accounts and later lied about by the colleague Mr Jacobs later set up with at BSM.

Mr Jacobs became a non-executive director and later told the DTI inquiry that, since Ozald was "in effect buying off competitors," the board took the utmost precautions "to avoid putting anything on paper. Ozald pretended the £150,000 was for 'consultancy services'." The truth was only turned up by persistent accountants. The DTI condemned the transaction as reprehensible, but confined itself to saying that it was "unfortunate that in this report Mr Jacobs figures in respect of the part he played concerning advisory services." A separate ICA inquiry found no grounds for criticising Mr Jacobs. The DTI never found out who ultimately got the money.

Mr Jacobs, a former Liberal candidate and now party treasurer, stands by his former colleague, who has since left the BSM to run his own company. He was "cared more than anyone else and didn't deserve it," he said last night. "He is a man of immense integrity who acted foolishly."

IT IS late time again already, and rate-capping is claiming still more victims. The leaving Campaign Group met on Wednesday and decided to knock Mr David Blunkett off its slate for the NEC, guilty by association, it seems, of Sheffield's decision to set a rate. This seems optimistic, as does Mr Blunkett's replacement, Mr Tom Doherty.

LARRY GOSTIN may have problems with his new civil liberties group, the Libertarian Alliance, for there are already two libertarian alliances in existence, both on the extreme Right. The looper one, based in Poland Street, London, is into the fringes of heroin advocacy. The more mainstream group, has appealed to Mr Gostin to change his organisation's name immediately.

CUNNING, these Yanks. Now better for the American Ambassador to travel incognito through the streets of London than by taxi? Armour-plated, mine-proof taxi, that is. Whether he still does is not known. But the ambassadorial taxi of 1973 is up for sale in Exchange and Mart this week for a mere £12,000. Only 7,000 miles on the clock. There have been one or two owners since the vehicle was knocked up to BSM specifications, ending up in the hands of the current seller, Robin Wood of West London.

KEN LIVINGSTONE is finally resigning as editor of Labour Herald, to be replaced by John McDonnell. Ken says he couldn't labour on with people "who have betrayed me and whom I hate."

THE TASK of finding someone to do a PR job for "m'friends" (or simply "m'friends," as barristers sometimes call solicitors) is proving an uphill one. The last Law Society PR man left in difficult circumstances but, as we reported last month, a successor was found in the form of the former Labour MP, Mr Michael Ward. Alas, the current New Law Journal reports that the society was greatly put out by this col. uard's disclosure that Mr Ward had once done PR for Sir T. Dan Smith. Mr Ward was put out that they should be put out, and also by the continuing mystery of his predecessor's departure. So now Mr Ward has decided he doesn't want the job after all and m'friends are left once more looking for a replacement.

Alan Rusbridger

Are the security services becoming more politicised? asks RICHARD NORTON-TAYLOR

Time for a little self scrutiny

SEVERAL former MI5 officials have been lavishly recently with their criticisms of the way the organisation works. In a letter from prison, where he is serving a 23 year sentence for attempting to send secrets to the KGB, Michael Bettaney criticised senior MI5 officials, including Sir John Jones, the former director-general who retired last month, for encouraging the security service to monitor the activities of domestic groups, including CND and trade unions.

Another former MI5 officer, Cathy Massiter, described in a television programme how the organisation surveys domestic targets. Peter Wright, a former official who now lives in Tasmania, has described how, instead of putting its own house in order, MI5 management began to divert resources to domestic groups, especially after the 1972 miners' strike.

Yesterday, the Security Commission delivered its own scathing attack on MI5 management, and by implication, on Sir John Jones. But it steered clear of the operations of MI5 itself; in

deed, it said that there was nothing to suggest that they should be called into question. Instead, it blamed senior MI5 officials for mishandling Bettaney's career.

According to the Security Commission's report there was no reason to doubt Bettaney's loyalty at the time he was recruited, even though at Oxford University he was a member of a right-wing group with a keen interest in Nazi politics. He had subsequently lived for a year in West Germany with a priest from Eastern Europe.

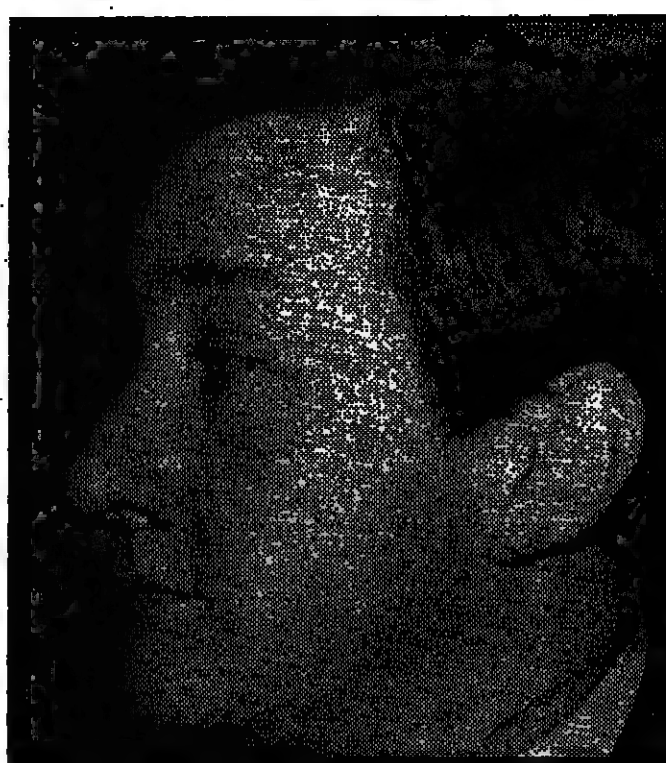
The Security Commission reserved its criticism for the failure of MI5 management to review Bettaney's positive vetting clearance, due in 1981, and for keeping him too long in Northern Ireland. It was during his 15 months there that Bettaney says his disillusion started.

He began to drink heavily and was arrested for being drunk in Oxford Street in October 1982. A few days later he was fined for a railway fare offence. He was then transferred to Section K of MI5, responsible for counter-espionage work.

MI5 is responsible not only for vetting its own employees, but also helping other departments vet their staff. Three years ago, the Security Commission emphasised the importance of searching for "character defects." Ironically, it suggested these presented more of a threat than ideological motives.

Mrs Thatcher told the Commons yesterday that she had asked the new MI5 director-general, Sir Anthony Duff, to consider "internal outlets" to allow MI5 officers to express their anxieties or grievances. It was a tacit recognition of the claim that MI5 officials are increasingly questioning the activities they are being asked to carry out.

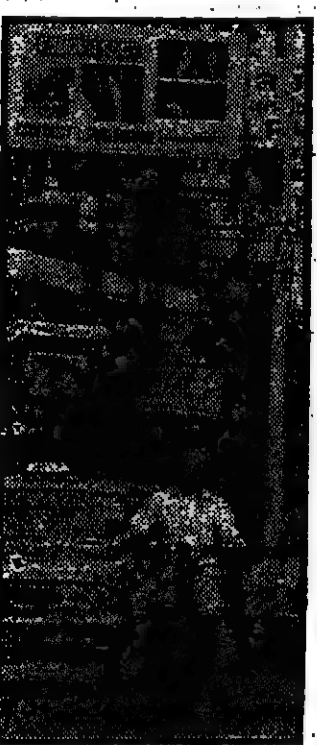
Former MI5 officials say that the security services, and its 2,000 officials, are being increasingly politicised—in common with the Civil Service. That is one reason why there are growing demands expressed on both sides of the Commons yesterday that MI5—its budget of £180 million—should be monitored, either by Parliament or by an independent Ombudsman.



Michael Bettaney: letter from prison cell

NICHOLAS CUMMING-BRUCE in Thailand examines the background to a Leyland contract

Big six-wheeler diesel engine Bangkok bus



MUSSOLINI's feat of making Italian trains run on time will look pretty modest if Leyland Bus and its partners in a British consortium pull off their deal with Bangkok's Mass Transit Authority. The £285 million contract which BMTA announced yesterday it plans to award to the British group is not merely to supply buses, 4,000 of them, but to make the bus system work.

In an attempt to drum up some public favour for the deal, officials of the government and publicly-derided Bangkok citizens with the notion the deal will mean quality bus services and regular schedules.

Such promises are the stuff of dreams to Bangkokians trapped in the nightmare world of their capital's traffic. Bus users are squeezed and shaken into over-heated human pulp as they cram themselves aboard

the BMTA's present fleet of rattling jalopies. And passengers are deflected by the roar of ageing engines or choked by the torrent of black effluvia trailing behind.

But although BMTA's announcement was something of a victory for Leyland, which fought off European and Japanese competition, that does not yet mean there is a deal. The package must be endorsed by the Communications Ministry and then by the Cabinet, where it is clear there will be tough opposition.

Finance Ministry officials are working on a "zero growth" budget designed to check soaring deficits, and they are turning a single eye on public spending proposals that involve recourse to foreign credit. They have also launched a privatisation programme, designed to increase efficiency and reduce debts in the public sector. BMTA, which they regard as a £70,000 a day, is an obvious target.

The Leyland deal, BMTA

officials say, will help the company and bring profitability in a matter of years. But with privatisation as a possibility, the Ministry may prove reluctant to authorise a big new infusion of public money.

The snags and pitfalls that beset the deal in this period of bureaucratic wheeling and dealing, are nothing to the potholes, real and metaphorical, that swart Leyland and its buses on the streets of Bangkok. Not for nothing have "well informed sources" been seducing the local press with accounts of how the gleaming single and double-decker buses from Leyland come with aluminium bodies, power brakes, and power steering, plus a life expectancy three times that of their Japanese competitors.

Significantly, an important part of the British package is the construction of 24 maintenance depots around the sprawling capital, and spare parts will reportedly come free for the first two

years of the contract.

Such considerations were crucial for a bus fleet which takes a severe beating at the hands of the many speed-crazed jockeys who drive it. Often they must perform a damaging semi-amphibian role, plunging through the floodwaters of a sinking city. Bangkok has lost many of its old canals in favour of roads, but during the rainy season it still merits its nickname as the "Venice of the East."

The cost of keeping the present bus fleet on the roads, together with high rental charges for its maintenance depots, are among factors blamed by previous BMTA management for the organisation's heavy losses. But even if Leyland overcomes these obstacles, there are other bad habits—corruption—it will have to tackle. Officials say privately this is a major factor in BMTA's financial difficulties.

Large amounts of revenue collected from passengers, they suspect, never quite make it into the organisation's coffers.

Already in trouble over Father Boff, the Pope fearlessly visits Holland this weekend where his views have divided the Church. ROBERT NOWELL reports

Dutch courage

WHEN the Pope kisses the tarmac of Eindhoven airport early tomorrow afternoon, at the start of a four-day visit to the Netherlands, he will have a hard job ahead of him if he is to arouse the kind of enthusiasm that greeted his visit to Britain in 1982, or to Ireland in 1979.

Events over the past 20 years, and particularly the Vatican's treatment of the Dutch Church, have conspired to polarise Dutch Catholics. Many of them, probably a majority, feel they have been betrayed by Rome. Others welcome the efforts being made to restore as much as can be salvaged of the uneasy pre-war ghetto Catholicism.

But it is not just the development of Catholicism that is at stake in Holland. What is at issue is how Catholics generally should interpret the Second Vatican Council, and the changes it brought about in the Catholic Church's understanding of itself. Did it mean a reversal of centralisation, more freedom and responsibility for national churches and for the ordinary Catholic worshipper? Or did it just mean a tidying-up of the existing system, restoration rather than reform?

The Dutch bishops had little doubt that it meant the first. They developed an open way of exercising their authority that fitted in with the temper of Dutch society. To implement Vatican II they set up a Pastoral Council to debate the policies the Dutch Church should follow. Two of the Council's decisions caused particular offence in Rome.

One was its verdict that the arguments of Humanae Vitae, the 1968 encyclical in which Pope Paul VI reaffirmed the traditional condemnation of artificial birth control, were not convincing. The other was its call to allow priests to be married.

Throughout the period since Vatican II, Dutch Catholicism has gone through a period of rapid adjustment to life in a pluralist secular society. This has meant a drop in church attendance which some have easily been able to present as a result of the changes brought about by the Vatican Council. Priests began leaving the ministry in greater numbers.

There were doctrinal arguments, too. In 1986 a small group of extreme conservatives denounced the newly-published catechism for adults to the authorities in Rome. The row dragged on for three years until a compromise was issued.

From Rome's point of view the Dutch Church, once so dependable—with only 1 per cent of the world's Catholic population it supplied 10 per cent of the world's Catholic missionaries—now seemed to be going off the rails. It had to be brought back into line.

Rome squashed Dutch plans for a permanent national Pastoral Council, but its real trump card was its control of the appointment of bishops.

The tradition was for the cathedral chapter of a vacant diocese to forward three names to Rome of suitable candidates. In the wake of Vatican II, extensive consultation was carried out in order to ensure that these reflected the wishes of the clergy and people of the diocese.

In 1970, Rome began a policy of ignoring diocesan wishes. It imposed what it regarded as "safe" men in Dutch sees, beginning with Bishop Adrian Simonis of Rotterdam (now Archbishop of Utrecht and about to become a Cardinal), and following this with the appointment of the extreme conservative bishop, Jan Matthijs Gijzen of Roermond.

The most recent appointment, that of Bishop Jan Ter Schure of Den Bosch, aroused even stronger protest. His predecessor, Bishop Bluyssen, said publicly that he was disappointed, and even Archbishop Simonis has been reported to be unhappy. An opinion poll found that only 5 per cent of the Catholics of the diocese were happy with the appointment.

Among those elsewhere who registered their disapproval were the nuns of the convent at Amersfoort where, next Tuesday, the Pope will spend the last night of his stay. Not only the Dutch will be watching with interest to see how the Pope handles this visit. For they are not alone in developing their own distinctive interpretation of Catholicism in ways that do not always fit easily with the directives coming from Rome. The Dutch were merely the first off the mark.

When Mrs Thatcher flies to Perth today, writes JAMES NAUGHTIE, she will find her troops restive

No longer a happy band of Scottish pilgrims

IT HAS been one of the great political sights of the year—the Scottish Tories, these most traditional Conservatives in rampant opposition to their Government. Mrs Thatcher, when she flies to Perth today, is going to find that the rallying speech has a purpose, for a change.

Of course, she will get her loyal ovation. Nothing less would be decent. But no-one who heard the muted applause—accompanied by an awkward crouching ovation—for George Younger yesterday could doubt that the northern ramparts are threatening to crumble still further.

The rates imbroglio, in which Mr Younger is still sunk despite his promise of £40 million in extra aid, has highlighted the weaknesses of the Conservatives in Scotland. It was long evident in electoral performance, but often obscured by the huge parliamentary majority at Westminster and the traditional sympathy which has characterised the party's relationship with Mrs Thatcher.

That has gone now. The amiable Mr Younger, whose Cabinet face has been one of sweet reason, in deliberate contrast to the Tebbit/Lawson scowl, found it difficult yesterday to deal with a conference which cheered a Tory councillor who warned that their throats were about to be cut at the next election and another who spoke darkly of "the ratepayers' revenge."

It is a break with tradi-



George Younger: embroiled in the rates

ing ovations for proposing some of the reforms in local government spending controls which this time had caused such agony. It is not long, as Mr Younger felt necessary to point out, since conference after conference refused to accept a single formula for rates reform.

What was extraordinary was the promise of new aid, and a pledge of legislation before the next election was not good enough. With a new ginger group due to meet in Perth this morning and the ladies of a certain age joining enthusiastically in the applause for the youngsters dashing the Government, it is evident that there is a genuine change of mood among the activists.

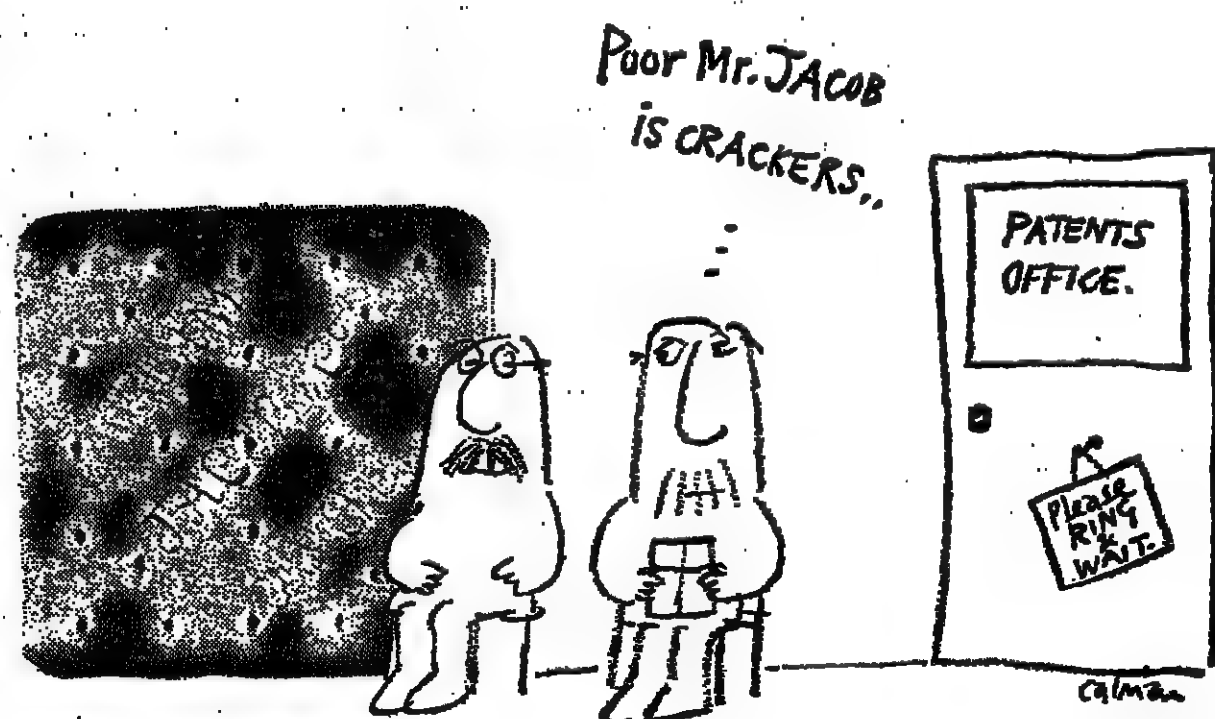
It cannot be solved easily, of course. There is no unity available for the Government in any of the obvious solutions. The poll-takers of the Right were active yesterday and democratic, they said it was—but they still had to do battle with the wets who will stand up against such a change. The difficulties, as Mr Younger well knows, cannot be solved by ingenious deals with the Treasury.

Mrs Thatcher is accustomed to come to Perth to lead a happy band which is there to be led. This year they want more. They will get their reassurance of rates reform—a promise in which Mr Younger was clearly meant to be the warm-up act—but behind it all there is a quivering unease that is striking.

Nowhere else in Britain does the Conservative Party vote together with greater electoral support. In the past, sheer faith has carried them through. Now, deep in mid-term, it seems that even the diehards are concerned. Mr John Selwyn Gummer watched yesterday's events with a wary eye, doubtless worrying lest such restlessness starts to spread.

They said last night that it had been a lively debate—the Tory euphemism for trouble. Sir Hector Monro, MP for Dundee and a most traditional soul, even found it convenient—perhaps necessary—to paint himself as a radical asking more from the party chiefs. To the old hands it was the witches' warning: if Hector is worried who is left?

When Mrs Thatcher arrives today, Mr Gummer might find a moment to give her a word of warning. What is interesting is how she will react. This time, the defiant style might not be enough.



We finally cracked it. It took us a bit of time though, and in one way William Jacob beat us to it. His introduction of cream crackers in 1885 scooped the market and made a lasting impression on the British palate.

Although our founder was a contemporary of Mr. Jacob, it was the best part of a century before we could proudly unveil our new cracker (a device for turning low value fuel oil into high value petrol).

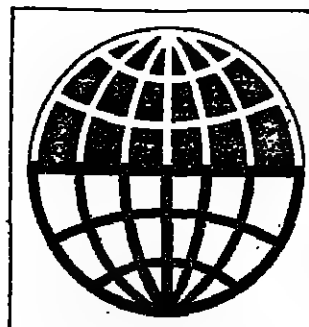
It's currently earning millions every year for Britain's balance of payments.

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Energy technology moves a little faster—and being in front when it comes to innovation keeps us in business.

But as the oldest international oil company in Britain, we're not at all cheesed off about sharing our 100th birthday with Mr. Jacob.

Mobil



THIRD COLUMN

Fabian fudge

ABOUT 50 people — 60, to be charitable — are gathered together in a committee room in County Hall to attend a meeting organised by the Labour Aid and Development Committee. There is an atmosphere of progressive colonialism, shades of the old Fabian Colonial Bureau. The meeting is to be addressed by the deputy leader of the Labour Party, Roy Hattersley, no less, as well as by minor luminaries like Dame Judith Hart and Stuart Holland, the shadow spokesman for overseas development. This is not, we are told, an official organ of the Party, but a pressure group within it on Third World issues.

"I'm afraid I have a disappointment for you," says Debbie in the chair rather crisply. Roy Hattersley, it appears, is unable to come. Trouble in the FLP. Other speakers, too, have other commitments and have to slip away early. It's always difficult to fit development into an MP's busy schedule. But Debbie is disappointed, glossy with enthusiasm. Stuart Holland just has time to launch into a party political broadcast on behalf of the Tigre People's Liberation Front, and to denounce the deficiencies of Ethiopian famine relief.

Though he would deny it vigorously, Holland — like most of the Labour Party's Third World advocates — is an old-style Fabian colonialist, cloaking essentially imperialist attitudes behind a veneer of internationalism. He keeps up a steady flow of development babble:

"market forces... role of multi-national capital... food aid debate... water development worldwide... important role of non-governmental agencies... like-minded multilateralism... fulfilling certain basic criteria... reverse conditionality... challenging vertical distribution of income... pluralism within a mixed market sector... basic needs approach... two more points if I may, Debbie... need to challenge hegemony of multinational capital... largest feasible macro view of world recovery."

And then Debbie comes to the rescue: "Thank you, Stuart, for getting us off to such a good start. And now we're on to what Labour would actually do, were it ever to regain power. In particular what would it do about the World Bank and the IMF, widely held to be responsible for many of the problems of the Third World?"

In a recent book by Teresa Hayter and Catherine Watson (Aid: Rhetoric and Reality, Pluto, £4.95), the authors call for a British withdrawal from these two institutions. Withdrawal, they suggest, would only make "a small dent in the post-war hegemony of the World Bank in Western aid policies," but it would at least weaken it. "It is by the constraints of finance and of some of the political legitimacy which enables it to maintain the pretence of impartiality."

Stuart Holland rejects anything so dramatic. Fabianism, he wants to change, but he agrees that Labour is "unlikely in the short term to change the policies of the Bank and the Fund single-handed. But we shall be working with others..." he adds wistfully.

Terry Davis, No. two in Labour's Treasury team and standing in for Roy Hattersley, also strikes "a note of caution about what could be realistically achieved." There is talk of "adding our weight to other countries such as Holland and Scandinavia who tend to have a more realistic approach to such matters." Terry Davis, an unapologetic chauvinist, has no desire to say goodbye to the World Bank. There is a need, he says in reply to questions, for more World Bank aid for birth control.

Judith Hart, never happier than when trying to dam the Limpopo or to change the face of Mozambican agriculture, is more radical. After years at the development front, she has become increasingly outspoken. "The changes that are needed at the Bank and the Fund," she says, "are so radical, and get so little support, that I doubt whether we are going to get them made in the time available."

She can't quite bring herself to call for withdrawal, but says that "we should start raising a number of questions." Like, for example, "who really needs the IMF? In what other ways could help be brought to Third-World countries? And does Britain have to be one of its key members?" These questions still lie on Labour's agenda. Will they be answered before the next election?

Richard Gott

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Hemmed-in by history and different kinds of exploitation — Ugandan refugees in a Sudan camp. Picture by Sophie Baker

Drought and famine cannot be divorced from social policies, argues Mahmood Mamdani, below. How sensitive the politics of famine are is revealed through the letter, right

How to stop the fat of the land feeding off the poor

I AM sorry I have a rather bad cough today. You can say I am prone to disaster, unlike some of you in the audience who look rather resistant to it. I remember hearing a story, during the Sahelian famine of the seventies, of a fat man and a thin man. Said the fat man to the thin man, "You should be ashamed of yourself. If someone visiting the country saw you before anyone else, he would think there was a famine here." Replied the thin man, "And if he saw you next, he would know the reason for the famine!"

The simple point I am trying to make is that if you divide our society into two, into the majority prone to disaster and that minority resistant to it, you are likely to find some sort of a relation between the two. Last year, I was doing research in Lira District. I met a capitalist farmer in one village. She had over 500 acres which she had bought (technically leased). I wondered how she could buy land in an area where people observed claim right to land quite strictly.

She replied, "The 1980 famine helped. People were in need. For the first time, they were willing to sell land, cows — things they wouldn't dream of selling in normal times." Famine, it would seem, is a disaster for the poor but an opportunity for the rich. The former are disaster-prone, the latter disaster-resistant.

Disasters are not natural but social catastrophes. They are the result of social conditions: deforestation, soil erosion, desertification. Lack of rain does not cause a famine, it is simply the occasion for it. It triggers off the famine. But why do people cut down

forests? Why do they over-graze? Why do they work the same old tired land without resting it? Is it out of malice? Or sheer ignorance? Not really.



Among the disaster-prone. Picture by Sophie Baker

I am going to talk about Uganda because this is where we are. All Africa has become much more prone to disaster in this century, and particularly in the past two decades, than it ever was before. So, I want to begin with the impact of the colonial period on the major producers of wealth, the peasants, in this country. An analysis of how this country was integrated into the colonial capitalist economy would show that there were two major forms of integration, depending on the region we may consider.

The first was where an area was turned into a cheap labour reserve. This was the migrant labour system whereby the wife remained at home producing food in the village, but the husband migrated as a worker to a plantation. He was employed only part-time, the rest of the year, he returned to the village and lived off the food cultivated by the wife.

The second was where an area was turned into a reserve of cheap raw materials. You take the above system, with the wife producing food and the husband cheap labour and collapse the distance between the husband and the wife.

With the wife still producing food and the husband producing an export crop, you now have a cheap raw material reserve. Cheap because the family produced its own food. The cash it got from selling cotton or coffee was just to pay tax and to buy a few manufactured necessities.

Now, in Uganda, there were quite a few cheap labour reserves at the outset of colonial rule: Lango, Acholi, West Nile, Kigezi. But in the 1920s, as the Belgians increased exploitation in Rwanda, the Banyarwanda peasants began to migrate to Uganda. In the late 1920s there was out-migration from Rwanda due to a political crisis. As a result, the British introduced cash crop production in Lango and Acholi in the 1920s and then in West Nile in the 1930s.

Today the only remaining cheap labour reserve is Kigezi. The rest of the country continues to be a cheap raw material reserve. Now the whole system of cheap raw material production required two conditions.

One, that labour meets a substantial part of its own cost of production (food cost). And two, that labour remains the major input in production; or, to put it differently, that the technological base remains low.

The above remains the general condition of the Ugandan peasantry today. The peasant is essentially trapped in two main types of exploitation.

The first is exploitation through unequal market relations where you sell cheap and buy expensive. This is monopoly exploitation, whether by state or private agencies.

In July, 1984, I investigated the millet trade in Lira District, and discovered that peasants received just 25 per cent of the final price of millet.

In December, 1983, I researched the coffee trade in Buganda. My data showed that the peasant received exactly 18.96 per cent of what the government got in the world market for the same coffee.

You would be surprised by how constant this proportion has been since the colonial period, whether in the first independent government, or in the Amin period or now.

The details vary from region to region. But together, they amount to three types of forcible exactions. These must be forced on the peasant, whether as a quarter of the peasant's total labour in certain villages, forced crops, usually those for export, or forced cash contributions for the party or the church.

The result of this dual exploitation — that through unequal market relations and that through direct force — is that the peasant operates with a permanent handicap: his surplus product is regularly siphoned off. His cash income is barely enough to meet immediate needs: for tax, to replenish a hoe or buy some salt or medicine. Peasants don't eat sugar any more; in many villages in the north, they can't even buy soap any more.

The point is that the peasant is forced to begin the production cycle each time with roughly the same or even worse technical base than the previous time around. Walter Rodney wrote that the African peasant entered colo-

onialism with a hoe and came out of it with a hoe. He should have added that the hoe was locally produced, the one he came out with was imported.

To grasp the point better, let us look at the peasant's labour process. It consists of three elements: land, labour, and implements of labour. We have seen that the peasant has little choice so far as the implements are concerned; his technology is relatively stagnant. To get out of a crisis or to endeavour for prosperity, what does a peasant do? He uses whatever control he has over land and over labour.

He works the tired land over and over. Why is it that periods of fallow are getting shorter and shorter in Kigezi? Or that cassava is replacing matoke and beans on Entebbe Road?

At the same time, the peasant has as many children as possible to maximise the labour at his disposal. For a middle-class family, a child may be just a mouth to feed for 20 years, but for a peasant family after only four years the child is also two hands to work. People are not poor because they have large families; they have large families because they are poor!

What is to be done? To begin with, it is necessary to safeguard against a utopian thinking, against looking for a solution outside the parameters of the problem by introducing it from without. We must be realistic and find the solution internally.

From this perspective, we can correctly define the role of relief or foreign aid. It can only be complementary to a local solution, not a substi-

tute for it. Failure to understand this can even compound the problem. During the Sahel famine of the 70s, for example, 30 per cent of the population of Mauritania was entirely dependent on relief food by 1974.

Such assistance is not an antidote to disaster. It becomes its hand-maiden.

Only that relief is worthwhile which undermines itself in the long run; which restores the initiative of the victim, and does not strangle it, which sees victims not simply as objects to be helped, but as subjects potentially capable of transforming their disaster-prone situation.

My main point is that any strategy that claims to be a solution must seek to revive the creativity and the initiative of the people. Central to this must be to educate people about these relations which make them disaster-prone. This education must be based on investigation, concrete and independent.

If land is taken to create national parks, must organise for the return of the land. If labour is maimed and shackled by administrative coercion, we must organise to remove that coercion. If products of labour are appropriated through monopolistic market practices, we must organise to change them.

Simply put, we must organise concretely, organise on the basis of a common education and educate on the basis of independent and popular investigation.

This is the edited text of a talk given to the Uganda Red Cross conference on Disaster Prevention in Kampala on March 18, 1985.

A letter to the President of Uganda

Mr President, Dr Mahmood Mamdani, a Ugandan, an associate professor of political science and the acting head of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Makerere University, Kampala, has lately run into problems with your government for his committed scholarship and progressive political standpoint.

Around April 19, 1985, while away in Spain attending a conference with the permission of his vice-chancellor, Mamdani received a letter from the Information Department purporting to declare him an alien in his own country. The immediate circumstances of your Excellency, which appear to have led to this arbitrary and unlawful stripping of Mamdani's citizenship, thus rendering him stateless, is a talk he gave recently to the Uganda Red Cross Conference on Disaster Prevention. The conference was held in Kampala.

The speech, your Excellency, attracted the attention of the Security Services. It was singled out for a violent attack in his closing address. Subsequently, the minister appeared on television and repeated the attack.

Soon after, officials affiliated to the Ministry of State for Security (the Criminal Investigation Department) interviewed Mamdani, and he was ordered to leave the country. He left for Spain, in April, in a letter was required purporting to declare Dr Mamdani an alien and asking him to surrender his passport to the authorities.

Dr Mamdani has written extensively on his country. He is the author of politics and Class Formation in Uganda and Imperialism and Feudalism in Uganda. He is also a leading academic journal, published by the Faculty of Social Sciences, Makerere University.

During the Amin period, Dr Mamdani was in exile in Tanzania, where he taught in this university.

In view of your Excellency's position as Chancellor of the University of Makerere and your known progressive stance on academic excellence and on rights of citizens in a democratic society, we appeal to you to intervene and stop this harassment and restore Dr Mamdani's citizenship.

Dr K. J. Tumbala, Chairman of Dar es Salaam Academic Staff Assembly.

- African countries with food shortages: Angola, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Sudan, Ethiopia, Botswana, Burundi, Cape Verde, Kenya, Lesotho, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, Tanzania, Zambia.
- UN estimate of emergency needs \$1.5 billion including \$1,078 million for food aid and transport and \$81 million for water projects.

- 150 million Africans threatened by famine.
- Food production has declined by 15 per cent since 1981.
- Food imports feed 1 in 5 Africans.
- Grain yields per hectare have fallen by a third in a decade.
- Industrial capacity is working at a third of its potential.
- Africa's interest payments are \$15 billion a year.

BANGLADESH

Upazilla struggle

President Ershad talks to Robert Bradnock on the eve of this week's elections

UNDAUNTED by continued rebuffs from the political parties or by the apathetic response of the electorate to his recent presidential referendum, President Ershad is urging Bangladeshis to the polls once more next week. Using his complete control of the media, he is giving daily prominence to the elections for the apparently mundane posts of chairman for the 460 upazillas

— the new units of local government. To the president the elections are a major step towards a new form of democratic government. He is optimistic, yet to be tested, is not widely shared. Throughout its 14-year life, Bangladesh has been beset by political crises. Successive governments, civilian and military, pampered the interests of a tiny minority and failed to build coherent political institutions or to bring development to the millions of rural and urban poor.

President Ershad's decision to re-impose martial law on March 1 was seen by many as another step back from building democratic institutions. His recent presidential referendum, a referendum of a corrupt and serving bureaucratic and military establishment. The president himself sees it differently, as an essential short-term check to the deliberately destructive tactics of the major opposition parties. Talking at the cantonment

residence which he occupies as chief of the armed forces, President Ershad argued that the upazilla elections are the culmination of a package of government reforms introduced last year.

The 460 upazilla councils each serve a population of about 200,000. The new councils have been given wide-ranging powers to raise revenue, for development planning and implementation. The key to their success lies in their accountability to the local electorate which will be tested in elections every two years.

"This will encourage them to live in their districts rather than setting up home in Dhaka. It will make them take an interest in the development of their villages," said Ershad.

The president claims that the upazilla have already had one notable success. As a result of the severe flood last summer some well-informed independent agencies forecasted the probability of famine and starvation. It didn't happen. The president puts that down to the effectiveness of the councils.

Each of the 460 was organised with godowns (warehouses) and allocated stocks of grain and cash. These were freely distributed as necessary. Daily reports to central government showed the level of stocks, and we were able to match the need with supply.

But the distribution of relief aid, on which Bangladesh is still heavily dependent, is not the longer term purpose of the upazilla reforms. "Bills have been poured away on useless projects or just unaccounted for. When I came I saw many aid projects, which were not at all what we needed — not at all."

He gave the example of the water board, referring to his own travels around villages. "I get a lot of complaints from villagers about not getting water from irrigation sluices that should be irrigating their land. So I ask — who's responsible for opening the sluice gates? Who keeps a record of where the water goes, who gets it, and for how long? No answer. The water board is hopeless, in chaos."

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Ershad — optimistic

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etter to
President
Uganda

The political double act with a forthright challenge

Michael
Meadowcroft

THE caricature of the Alliance's doorstep approach depicted in the Guardian's leading article on Tuesday contains too much truth to be comfortably dismissed. It would, however, be dangerous to shift as effortlessly to the editorial's all too obvious solution of amalgamation. It would equally, and for similar reasons, be foolish to regard the splendid county election results as other than beneficial to the administration of our shires and offering the potential of building political success on top of electoral success.

It is not, of course, illegitimate to analyse, and to recommend with a view to

short term Alliance electoral success but the need is for a better understanding of the country's malaise and of the deliverability — let alone workability — of amalgamation. Our electoral system produces a "broad church" mass parties that are alliances of differing tendencies within them. To maximise a party's electoral appeal, its leadership is forced to pretend that it has uniformity rather than just unity.

It is plainly nonsense but to have all grimly assented to it over the years. The Alliance simply professes that an open alliance is preferable and matches reality. Amalgamation into a closed alliance is seductive, and may well have its immediate electoral benefits, but it would be a pretence and would be pandering to the traditional British vice of wanting politics without commitment or even any mental exercise.

The Guardian leader is

strangely blinkered in that it apparently sees the traditional political framework as immutable. Conservative and Labour parties inevitably do so — as vividly demonstrated by their arrogant response to the electors' wish to deny them total power in most county councils — but one expects more of the Guardian. One might reasonably hope that leader writers would at least take heed of their paper's own commentators. For instance, Hugo Young was much nearer the mark in writing, "... Britain is consumed by the politics of rancour but deprived of the politics of argument. It is not merely that there is no opposition to challenge the government. The situation is a much more scandalous indictment of politicians. Its chief characteristic is that no coherent body of thought or credible programme of action exists outside Thatcherism." (Guardian, December 31).

Banking after a single Alliance party hinders the development of that "body of thought." If a mechanistic solution to a political problem can produce electoral success, which I personally doubt, why look further?

The fact is that the "solution" would produce its own problems and would give rise to equal criticism. I can even now visualise Guardian leading articles, not to mention Hugo Young pieces, depicting the milk and water centrism of its inevitable style and calling for a radical focus on, and a deeper response to, Britain's formidable problems.

In any case, the "solution" looks only as far as the next General Election — the Alliance's "Becher's Brook" — as the leader writer puts it. The problem with the Grand National is that the course has to be negotiated twice for victory, and any stable that spends the

first part of the race deciding on the jockey's colours is going to fall long before Becher's. Far better to run two fit horses with two determined jockeys. The very process of trying to amalgamate two parties would occupy every waking hour for at least two years, and even the unnecessary effort to elect one David as leader of the Alliance would be a gift to our opponents. Imagine a six week campaign, similar to an American presidential primary. It would be a good clean fight — with no survivors.

The Alliance parties cannot avoid the problems faced by the electoral system which heavily favours the two class based parties. We in effect have the present French electoral system but without the first ballot. It is not at all surprising that we have kept competition for individual seats. It is amazing that in June 1983 the alliance had only three seats in

which its two parties both contested — the same number, in fact, in which Labour had two candidates. Given the unpalatable necessity of working the electoral system to add the "unnecessary" handicap of extra interparty competition.

Above all, Tuesday's leader ignores the processes of politics and devalues political thought. If the Alliance is to reap votes at the next General Election it must sow for commitment now. No doubt there is a substantial section of the electorate that will vote for moderation and against extremism. Personally I do not believe there is much more than the 25 per cent or so that we reached in February 1974 or June 1983, but I know of no substantial section of the electorate that will work day in and day out, whatever the conditions and the difficulties, for other than a deeply felt and keenly held ideal

and vision of society. The psychological evidence on the volatility of the Liberal vote in the past four General Elections is alarming but not inevitable. The counter evidence from a number of individual areas where there is an emphasis on political values and campaigning is of real commitment to the Liberal Movement. There is nothing intrinsically exclusive about either these areas or Liberal values but the acceptance of a non-political "solution" will inhibit their application elsewhere.

Labour and Conservative depend for their electoral success increasingly on class conflict and on a determination to use the powers of the state centrally and locally, to foster only that which is exclusive to their narrow political definition. Compare, for instance, the sad undermining of the NCC and the destruction of the GLC with the fact that it is two balanced councils, Brent and

Bradford, which have the highest proportion of voluntary sector schemes in this year's Urban Programme Submission.

There is no future in applying dogmatic ideologies of the nineteenth century to the problems of the approaching twenty-first. The need is for a progressive philosophy that emphasises the integrity and integration of the community, that rejects statism, distrusts hierarchies and central control, and which uses communal resources to enable individuals and groups to achieve their liberation in a variety of ways.

To seek salvation in rain-bow arithmetic or in a reliance on leadership is only for those who are not alert to the crucial issues of the day. With Yeats I believe that "only dead sticks can be tied into convenient bundles."

Michael Meadowcroft is Liberal MP for Leeds West.



Poling last week in Biddenden, Kent: a case of balance—or expediency? Picture by E. Hamilton-West

A hanging offence in the shires

BASIL JEUDA

IN MANY parts of England and Wales last week's county council election results were received with dismay by councillors and officers alike, and no more so than in those many shire counties which have been used to one party and which now found themselves "hung."

Of the 47 counties, 46 are now hung with no political group in overall control.

As someone that has been through the mill in Cheshire over the past four years, I would not wish a hung council on anyone, though procedures, principally a document entitled Conventions Regarding Relations Between The Political Parties Represented on the Council, were developed and the officers came to terms with the hung council and with the need to avoid chaos and anarchy.

Cheshire, between 1981 and 1985, had four different

political administrations hewn out of different political alliances and both councillors and officers with patience, tolerance and effort made it work whilst at the same time maintaining fundamental political differences.

The system had to cope with at any one time chairmen and vice-chairmen of committees from each of the political parties in any combination — and also cope with the briefing of political groups especially at budget time which led on one occasion to three separate budgets being prepared, one for each group. The main reason for securing stability in administration was the conventions document referred to earlier.

Without going too much into the details of this particular document some ideas

of the breadth of coverage can be best appreciated from the issues which it covered. First of all, there needed to be a definition of the governing party which was seen to be the party with the largest number of seats and the holder of the great majority of chairmanships and vice-chairmanships (for 24 years Labour, 13 years Conservative); there needed to be a definition of the leader of the governing party as chairman of the policy and resources committee was leader of the council.

Secondly, there needed to be a definition relating to the nomination by other parties of their spokesmen or sub-committee, and indeed recognition that the governing party might need to nominate a spokesman on a committee or sub-committee where it did not have the

chairmanship of such a committee.

Thirdly, there needed to be rules relating to the briefing of chairmen together with an indication that the chairmen have the discretion to invite the governing party's spokesmen to such briefings. In Cheshire the Liberals always invited the spokesmen of the other two parties to briefings relating to committees of which they held the chair.

Fourthly, arrangements had to be put in hand for the briefing of party groups, including the right of the governing party to request such a briefing and similarly the right of other political parties to request briefings.

Fifthly, there was the issue of other information for members. For example, where a chairman or vice-chairman asks a chief officer for information, that information would not normally be supplied to spokesmen of other parties; similarly, where a chief officer provides information on his own initiative then he has the discretion to provide such information to other parties.

Sixthly, rules needed to be established whereby official county council press statements could be made by the chairman of all committees, irrespective of their party political membership, relating to the council's policy. Facilities however were available for parties to send out their own press statements but at their own cost.

These were the rules in summary form signed by the

respective leaders of the three groups but they were never formally put to the county council. The fact that the rules were prepared in the first place is a tribute to the political skill and feel of Cheshire's chief executive, Mr Robin Wendt. In an article he wrote for Local Government Studies in May/June 1983 he commented as follows:

"In essence, working in a hung council puts a premium on the traditional qualities and skills of the public servant: accuracy and honesty in the presentation of information; objectivity and constructiveness in the proffering of advice; neutrality in the face of political conflict; patience and resilience when there is delay and frustration in decision making; integrity and mutual confidence and respect in relationships with politicians; and a sense of humour."

I would endorse that and add the word stamina.

One myth has to be exploded and it is put about by the Alliance that the rules were "balanced" — and therefore make "balanced" decisions. Our experience in Cheshire, and no doubt that of others elsewhere proves this to be a myth. For example, Liberal opposition to the building of a new mid-level bridge across the Manchester Ship Canal at Warrington was born out of the narrow political expediency to save a marginal Liberal seat rather than any objective assessment of professional opinion

and of the strong pleas of Warrington industry.

Again Liberal opposition to solving the Gypsy problem in the Congleton area was not based on high moral principles of "balance" or fairness, but on crude political expediency. The acid test of the Alliance's stance on balanced or hung councils could best be measured in say the Isle of Wight, or in the Devon situations — is it the Alliance's view that the IOW which is Liberal controlled would be better run if Labour had the balance of power and does it now think that Devon or Gloucestershire will now be better run because Labour has the balance of power as the smallest party?

Certainly the experience in Cheshire leads to the conclusion that from both the officers' and from the members' points of view, it is unrealistic to plan ahead for more than a few months. All concerned have to come to terms with this — and this short term planning horizon is on top of all the existing uncertainties of targets, penalties, and rate support grant changes, and the ever changing arrangements for capital expenditure allocations. All this leads to the inevitable conclusion that the case for a hung or balanced council is, in political and in managerial terms, not proven.

Basil Jeuda was until the recent county elections leader of the Labour group on Cheshire County Council. He is chairman of Cheshire Labour Party.

When the game changes, so does the guide to form

David McKie

NEWSPAPERS last weekend were packed with projections attempting to show what would happen at the next general election if the voting mirrored the pattern of the county council results. It's an unrealistic exercise, of course. Large areas of the country were excluded from Thursday's voting. The turnout was far lower than it would be at a general election. And the issues being decided were, ostensibly at least, entirely different. And in any case, virtually anything — well, not perhaps a second Falklands war, but very nearly anything — could happen between Mrs Thatcher give the starting signal.

But in one respect this sudden outbreak of estimates is a healthy development. It's a sign that people are adjusting to life in a three-dimensional party system. There was a time when you had only to glance at the polls as you would at the football results to see who was pat-

tern would be disrupted by a surge in Liberal support, but only two contenders in the race, and the one which was ahead was marked down for outright victory.

Nowadays, with the Alliance settled at around 25 per cent of the popular vote, predictions are much more awkward. The last Guardian/Morplan inde, for instance, gave Labour 38 per cent of the vote. The local elections told much the same story.

Is that good or bad for Labour? Mr Kinnoch and his colleagues think it's pretty good, and most of last weekend's independent experts agree that it would put Labour only just short of an overall majority.

Yet it's actually much in line with the share of the national vote which Labour took in 1979, when it was swept out of office on the wrong end of the biggest electoral support which spelled disaster six years ago. In other words, now qualifies in a three-dimensional world, as success.

The concept of "swing" which has served us well for so long, is also showing its age in the new political

climate. Swing is essentially an invariable shorthand formula for measuring the relative success and failure of two competing parties.

There are two ways of computing it. The first is the average of one party's gain and another's loss. If the Conservatives go up six percentage points and Labour goes down four, you add six to four, divide by two, and arrive at a swing of 5 per cent. Alternatively you may be dealing with a result in which both main parties have lost ground. In this case, the Conservatives are 2 points down, Labour are 4 points down and the Liberals are up by 6. In this case you take the difference between the losses of the two main

parties and divide that by two. In the case of the Conservatives, you lost more, to the Conservatives, who lost less, of one per cent.

In a stable two-dimensional era you could make a good guess, on the basis of such swing calculations, at how many seats would change hands between Labour and the Conservatives on the basis of a given swing — if only by laboriously counting the marginals where existing majorities would be destroyed by the level of swing you were assuming. But in the new three-dimensional world it is nothing like so simple.

Take, for instance, a six per cent swing from Conser-

vative to Labour. Where would that leave the parties at the next election? The short answer to that is: almost anywhere. If it meant a straight six per cent switch of votes from Conservative to Labour (Conservatives minus six, Labour plus six — average six), the Conservatives could hope to retain an overall majority, even if it were only one. Labour would take about 275 seats and the Alliance around 28.

But suppose the Conservative vote fell by eight points, with Labour and the Alliance both four points up on the 1983 election. This is still, in theory, a six per cent swing from Conservative to Labour (minus eight, plus four = average six). But now, according to my three dimensional swingometer, the Conservative strength is down to around 310. Labour has around 270 seats, and the Alliance has 46; enough for a workable pact with the Conservatives, but not enough for a joint working majority with Labour.

Or to take an admittedly extreme example: assume that the Conservative vote is 10 points down on 1983,

Labour's is two points up, and the Alliance is up by eight. That is still, in theory, a six per cent swing from Conservative to Labour (minus ten, plus two = average six) but now the Conservatives have around 275 seats, Labour around 260, and the Alliance (which by capturing seats from Labour as well as from the Tories) has over 90. Dr Owen has achieved his dream of holding the balance.

None of which, of course, proves anything at all about the next election. None of it may ever happen. But at least it may help to demonstrate the extraordinary uncertainties and complexities — and at some levels of vote, the scope for grotesque electoral injustice — which come from operating what is philosophically a two-party system in a three-party world.

And it also suggests that, for all their frailty and inability to sort out electoral projections which flowered so profusely last weekend, the essential rough-and-ready guide to elucidating what the polls are trying to tell us

The dangers of punishing the solicitor

OUT OF COURT

Geoffrey Robertson

BRITISH justice appears sexist and hypocritical by branding the street prostitute a criminal while allowing her client to drive off without a stain on his character. At first blush the Sexual Offences Bill, which reaches its report stage in the Commons today, makes an even-handed adjustment by criminalising kerb-crawling males who "solicit a woman for the purpose of prostitution." But attempts to make people good by Act of Parliament are generally more difficult than moralising politicians like to admit, and this particular legislation poses grave threats to civil liberties.

Let it be conceded at once that importunate kerb-crawlers are an intolerable nuisance to residents of those inner-city areas where street prostitution flourishes. And the only way of dealing with them at present, by summoning them to be bound over for breaking the peace, is inappropriate and unjust because the innocent "defendant" has no safe guards whatever. Eccentricities of justice continue in Nottingham. Magistrates Court, where recently the bench, in a blaze of publicity, found a gynaecologist to be of good behaviour in spite of its finding that he had "no immoral intent" in approaching prostitutes in a Gladstonian effort to save their souls. (His mistake was to approach a prostitute whose soul may be assumed by law to be unblemished).

Prostitution cannot be eradicated: the task of containing it, if not in acceptable then at least a tolerable level, requires thorough-going law reform which includes a degree of decriminalisation. Successive governments have failed to do this necessary but apparently vote-losing task, while social conditions — unemployment, drugs, pornography and the like — have made it a more serious problem in recent years.

Convictions for street soliciting almost doubled, from 5,811 in 1982 to some 10,000 in 1983, while escort agencies, massage parlours and "hostess" clubs run the occasional gauntlet of police raids and Sunday journalism. While the wealthy can obtain paid sex with comparative ease, the less fortunate punter must patrol the streets in search of assignees who would, in most European countries, be more suitably for sale behind the doors of licensed brothels.

In this context kerb crawling is not so much an evil in itself as an inconvenient symptom of a demand which the law does not allow to be satisfied in any rational way. If prostitutes could band together and work discreetly from licensed houses in non-residential areas of major cities, the problems which have produced the Sexual Offences Bill would not arise. But since Parliament will not tackle the decriminalisation of prostitution, it has chosen to make its practice as difficult and dangerous as possible for the people who choose to engage in it. That danger will now be magnified for men who stop to ask innocuous questions of women in the street.

The Bill makes it a crime for a man to solicit a woman for the purposes of prostitution from a motor vehicle, or "while in the immediate vicinity of a motor vehicle that he has just got out of or off." This inelegant drafting will return to plague the courts: How many yards will constitute "immediate vicinity"? How many seconds — or

minutes — may amount to "just" having alighted? Law teachers will delight in tormenting their students with fresh problems of statutory construction: can you be guilty of soliciting from a truck, a taxi, a C8, or a Clapham omnibus?

But much more important is the question of how the new law will be enforced on the streets and in the courts. The offence is committed by one single act of solicitation: the driver who slows down and asks a woman "how much?" is guilty, whether or not she is in fact a prostitute. If the address is not a prostitute, and is sufficiently quick-witted to take down the car number and sufficiently outraged to testify, well and good: the occasional pest may be caught, and the cross-examination of the complainant, while it may suggest she is hard of hearing, is unlikely to probe her moral character. If the kerb crawler has solicited a prostitute, of course, then she is hardly likely to complain to the police.

It follows that most cases will be brought as a result of police action, without corroborative civilian evidence. There is no right to jury trial, and magistrates will be invited to draw the inference of guilt from police observations. The fact that a car is seen to slow down in an area frequented by prostitutes, and words exchanged with a woman on the footpath, will be enough to amount to a prima facie case, and call for the driver to make his explanations — perhaps of a quite innocent request for directions — before smirking reporters in open court.

The danger of conviction of the innocent is considerable, but the damage will be done by the reputation of innocent men whose acquittals are accompanied by sensational publicity in their local newspapers. (It is perhaps too much to hope that the first person prosecuted under the new law will be an MP who has stopped his car to ask a young woman the way to a constituency function).

But there is an easier method for police to be sure of obtaining convictions, which relies entirely on public-spirited complainants or the uncertainties of observation evidence. It is to use police women and police informers as decoys to entrap the motorists who are minded (perhaps only after setting eyes on the decoy) to ask for sex. The use of plainclothes policemen as "agents provocateurs" on city streets is a most unattractive feature. Its enforcement in some American states, and in 1982 the Police Advisory Committee on Sexual Offences warned that the difficulties of obtaining evidence for such an offence might make it a common practice here.

If Parliament is bent on creating this new crime it should at least have sufficient regard for civil liberties to add an entrapment defence, entitling the motorist to an acquittal if he can show that his solicitation would not have been made without the encouragement by dress, deportment, gesture or words — from a police agent.

The Sexual Offences Bill is yet another example of Parliament's current contempt for trial by jury. Any crime which puts reputation seriously at stake, and is likely to involve assessment of police credibility should on principle be triable by jury rather than by magistrates or lay justices. Although the penalty for this offence must be minor, specific provision could and should have been made for a defendant to elect jury trial. Refusal to countenance this course is the best indication of Parliament's lack of confidence in the virtue of its own justice.

Geoffrey Robertson is a barrister and editor of the Out of Court column.

Alan Davidson, former ambassador and author of the definitive works on seafood, will be starting a food diary of a recent oriental tour next Friday. Christopher Driver reports.

Ichthyologist at large

OVER the weekend, a colour magazine travel writer eating a meal on Elba let the trade down by referring to the "delicious but unidentified fish" on her plate. In other words, she'd left her Davidson at home. In principle, there is no fish that the British traveller cannot identify by asking the waiter the local name and looking it up in *Mediterranean Seafood* or *North Atlantic Seafood*.

And for this service among others we have the selection procedures and career structure of the Foreign Office to thank. Alan Davidson, CMG, bowed out of the FO as Ambassador in Vientiane when it was intimated that his next posting would make a Whitehall warrior of him and "my blood ran cold because there was a lot more travel I wanted to do."

"Not that it is all that easy for ambassadors to travel: you are supposed to ask permission every time you leave the country you're accredited to. I was engaged on Seafood of South East Asia by that time and I had to send a telegram to London every time I took a boat across the Mekong to the fisheries research institute on the Thai side."

A Davidson despatch must have been quite an event on the south-east Asian desk back home. There was the up-country dinner at which western diplomats were finally permitted to meet and question the Pathet Lao leaders about the future of the region. Intense boredom, verging on slumber, greeted the questions until Davidson leant across the table to pursue his researches into one of the four species of snakehead fish that swim in the waterbeds of Laotian rice fields.

The insurgent leader brightened visibly. "I used to hunt them as a boy..." and his account lasted the whole meal. As Davidson concludes, "most people in the world would sooner talk food than politics and will fall over themselves to help you if you have an intense practical interest in something."

A less tolerant employer might never have sent Davidson to Laos. After his Tunis posting, where his American wife Jane had started it all by asking him for the Mediterranean fish book no one had then written, he was sent to Brussels as a jack-of-all-strategies, and settled down to write a novel between committees. Something Quite Big, a still-topical environmental thriller envisaging the kidnapping of NATO's Senior Political Committee on a bus outing, did not go down too well in Whitehall and remains unpublished.

However, the diplomatic service teaches a man a thing or two about casuistry. Davidson took the manuscript with him to Laos, where he concluded that it was forbidden to publish. "I did not mean to be a publisher," he found a priest with a printing press who said *nihil obstat* to the idea of running off 400 copies of a bibliographical curiosity: a book with a designed cover by Souvannaphone, then a student, who still illustrates Davidson's work, but no author, title page, or date (1974). This did not prevent it being reviewed in Brussels anonymously by a senior member of the UK NATO delegation.

Now, still only just the wrong side of 60, Davidson has gone literally to earth in the booky basement of the family house in World's

End, Chelsea. Next week in *Guardian Food and Drink* he begins a food diary of a recent oriental tour, not as an old FO hand but as ichthyologist at large, organiser of the Oxford Symposia which welcome all comers to St Anthony's College to discuss culinary history and (next month) science, and author-editor of the projected Oxford Companion to Food.

The delivery date of this book has become as elastic as strudel dough ("Shall we say 1990?") partly because the subject keeps expanding and partly because he has become a publisher himself. Prospect Books, which he runs from home with his like-minded wife and daughters and a samizdat telephone number now has a turnover of £30,000 a year and a backlog of nearly 20 cookery book facsimiles (Hannah Glasbe, Charles Carter, Richard Bradley and others), all sprung from the little magazine, *Petits Propos Culinaires*, which cost his little group of scholar-cooks £50 to launch six years ago.

Caviare to the cook-general, certainly: an article in the current issue of *PFC* is headed "Norwegian Gastronomic Literature from 1760 to 1814". Davidson's support network is as global as the British Council, whose interest in food culture, ours or theirs, is less conspicuous.

Not all ambassadors have been as successful at finding an export market for British goods, British thoughts and, it has to be said, British eccentricities. The telephone rang a belated contributor in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Davidson took a box of Swan Vests out of his reticule and parked it on the upper edge of Food Grains of India, to remind himself to ring her back.



picture of Alan Davidson by Martin Argles

Grace before meals

By Alison Prince

IN the long-dead days of the LMS and the LNER, there were smells of roast beef and engine smoke. The dining car was heavy and the tables were cluttered with starch, and a waiting waiter could spill a roasting meat from a silver-plated pot with spoons as graceful as swan necks. British Rail changed all that. But railway dining cars remain places of hopeful nostalgia, as the train lay in the chance to sample Russian and Chinese meals on wheels.

On the arrangements made by our travel company (the marvellously cheap Yorkshire Tours), each meal consisted of three elements, an element being a course, but being also hot or cold drink. So a meal could consist of any three taken from zakouski (cold meats and/or cheese), soup, main course, sweet (semolina or a little cake or a packet of orange wafer) apple juice, tea or (at breakfast) something coffee.

The dining car staff obviously expected us to eat everything up. Food was served at breakfast, which was served at increasingly bizarre hours as we progressed eastwards.

Moscow time holds good all over the USSR, so a kind of slow jet-lag had affected the party by the time we sat down to breakfast in broad daylight at 3 a.m. As someone remarked sourly, the train ought to be known as the Disorient Express. The meal that particular morning consisted of zakouski followed by a rather undercooked chicken leg rolling round its metal plate until it came to rest in the inevitable creamed potato and pinkish tomato and onion sauce, and it was not popular. And yet, it was immensely pleasurable to be sitting over a glass of tea while the white landscape rushed past outside and the pale sun gradually strengthened the dining car.

The dining car was presided over by a large, crumpled man with a lugubrious face like Walter Matthau on a bad day. He dumped dishes on the table ferociously, and snatched them up when finished with as if impatient to get the decadent Westerners out as soon as possible. Not daring to ask his name, we referred to him nervously as Boris.

One evening Boris had served us with eggs, cooked our plate with lots of butter. They were excellent. Killed Jimmy sat opposite me, chewing, and slowly breaking off a piece of bread with which to mop up the last volky deliciousness when Boris's hand descended to grab his plate. Jimmy, with a crumb-spitting exclamation, simply snatched it back. And, to everyone's amazement, Boris broke into roars of laughter when Jimmy was off to the kitchen to tell them about it, and there was more laughter. Then he came out, spotted a Manchester United supporter's badge and announced that he used to play for a football team. We all got on like a house on fire.

By the time we reached Manchuria, the dining car seemed like home and Boris a slightly irascible father-figure. But at the border, after a breakfast of sausage and caviar and a lot of affectionate fussing, the Russian dining car came no further. After the check on passports, visas, literature, immigration and fruit (the Chinese confiscated our lemons in case they were contaminated with Soviet germs), we found later what they fetched on the black market; we made our way down the corridor for Peking-style dinner. And into a different world.

Walters in crisp white jackets were bowing deferentially, smiling like slices of canteloupe, and there was a general air of fretwork ying-tongy. Red tassels hung from lanterns and the tables were decked with tempting bottles of Chinese brandy, which those who bought found to be unimpressive. Dish upon dish of food was served swiftly and politely. Prawns, cauliflower, meat, bean-curd dumplings, bowls of this soup, which I became known as "the rubber bands", it was all delicious.

The Russian "provodniks" who vacuumed corridors and disposed of the rubbish from the samovar in each coach had stayed with the train and they eyed us disapprovingly as we came back again. They looked uneasy in the presence of the "Chinese menace" and clearly felt that such blatant wooing of the west was distasteful. It could have been envy—it was obvious that the Soviet crew could not rise to such opulent catering—but there is also a bloody-minded honesty about Russian view of things which does not easily accept what it regards as syncretism.

In China it is not polite to say what you mean, least of all to a foreigner, but the train reached the frontier on its return journey and some amongst us expressed regret at losing the Chinese dining car for a Russian one, the waiter's permanent smile was unmistakably tinged with smugness.

Some of the passengers, too, were disapproving about the cabbage soup and tough meat which would be for the next six days. But as we pulled away from Manchuria on the way back to Moscow, our provodnik was singing in his cabin beside the samovar.

Christopher Driver
Food and wine editor



Edward Barends's May drawing for Ambrose Heath's first book *Good Food* (1932). By permission of the artist and Faber & Faber

Name this lamb

MOST local and evening paper columns on best buys in food are something to institutionalise. The British Farm Produce Council, in the nature of things, the tone is usually impersonal, but this week's caught the eye by discussing, surely, someone's lifestyle.

"There was a time when such things as pig's trotters and pig's head were much in demand. Modern shoppers seem to have got away from stuffing their own brains or serving trotters for tea."

The same handout's descendant on the delicacy of new English lamb, coupled with the spectacle of baby purple turnips in the foreground, suggested that the moment had arrived for navarin printanier. There ensued in a local butcher's one of those moments of cultural lucidity that enlighten modern Britain. An Egyptian was asked Mr Boues where his wife could obtain a lamb, not to eat out for the children to play with—a confusion of categories, which would have frightened Roland Barthes but obviously embarrassed both parties.

The butcher's next puzzle was this Englishman's request for £10 worth of the different—mostly cheap and unpopular—lamb cuts that the navarin recipe advised to balance tastes and textures in this dish, shoulder, scrag, breast, and best end.

The explanation and preparation reminded him of a cut that had once—but only once—been requested by a customer, apparently involving a best end of neck with the breast left attached so that the skin could form a balloon stuffed with rice and hen's can any reader supply name, nationality, recipe, or all three for this dish?

Bottle party

ALAN Davidson's half-suppressed novel, described elsewhere on the page, has a curious counterpart in the half-suppressed 1975 Cabernet Sauvignon from Argentina chosen for quality and value for money by What Wine's professional tasters (including John Avery, the primary source) this month. There are mere 700 bottles left in Britain, because imports were banned with the invasion of the Falklands just a week after the first 12,000 bottles were landed. These 700 bottles should be hoarded for drinking at the horrendously predictable celebrations of Falkland's anniversary at ten

year intervals between now and the end of time.

Kitchen think

INFORMATION about this year's Oxford Symposium at St Anthony's College on June 26 and 27 can be had from the organiser Tom Jaine, Allal House, Allalagh, Blackawton, near Totnes, Devon. The subject is "Science, tradition and innovation in the kitchen." The Liberal Ecology Group discuss food supply, domestic and global tomorrow at the Art Workers' Guild, 6 Queen's Square, London, WC1. Speakers include Colin Spedding, Frank Raymond and Caroline Walker.

Honest bottle

GRAN Sangredetoro Penedes 1976 (now giving way to 1977) is a Spanish red wine from the Bodegas Torres in Penedes, a few kilometres south of Barcelona in North-east Spain. The house of Torres is unique. The largest independently owned wine firm in Spain, it has 10 per cent of the home market, and exports to 85 different countries, which never advertises, and never exports in bulk: it sells only bottled wine. It remains a purely family business. Don Miguel Torres, at 76, controls it completely. His wife Margarita, of about the same age, is responsible for Eastern European markets.

The eldest son, Juan Maria, is manager of the import department. The younger, Miguel, who is in charge of wine-making, lately he has been much engaged with their new vineyards in Chile; and he will be responsible for the wine they are taking over in China. The daughter, Margarita, is president of Torres Wines North America.

In 1939, during the Spanish Civil War, the Torres winery was bombed; the wine ran down the gutters of Villafranca and Don Miguel sat on the kerb-edge and wept. In 1979, his Gran Coronas Black Label won the top Cabernet class in the Gault Millau wine olympics against *grands crus* of the Medoc.

Gran Sangredetoro is a big, full, well-aged wine, alcoholic but with no hint of harshness; magnificent with rich meat dishes or full flavoured cheeses. It is a cheap luxury at about £4 from Harrods, Tesco (selected branches), Victoria Wine and Tanners Wines of Shrewsbury and the Marches.

John Arlott

Surprise, surprise

In Peebles, ANICE ALEXANDER attempts an unexpected type of Scottish cooking, involving some hydrophobic. And in Amsterdam, ADAM HODGKIN visits a restaurant without an address, designed to puzzle Nicolas Freeling's detective *van der Valk*.

Where once the fabled to be flocked to ease their laded and debilitated nerves with eucalyptus baths and the hot Italian mud cure, pains are now offered "particularly healthy meals" to restore and resuscitate. The manager, Mr Peter van Dijk, was persuaded by his own thickening waistline that his customers had a right to nouvelle nutrition à la NACNE.

With the advice and assistance of Mary Curator, a senior nutritionist at Queen Margaret College, he has made some fundamental changes to the hotel's cuisine. Out go animal fats for browning and frying and in come low-cholesterol vegetable oils. Likewise, white flour has been forsaken for wholemeal, and cream for yoghurt. The chef, Joe Turner, thickens his sauces and gratins by reducing the juices or using puree of fruit, rather than traditional roux, butter or cream.

At the lunchtime buffet table a variety of fresh vegetables—carrots, Chinese leaves, fennel, radishes, cucumber, tomatoes—are served raw. In the evening pear and chive, or apple, orange and mellow salads are high fibre, low fat alternatives to fried whitebait or smoked spiced mackerel. Cook-a-leek soup and Scotch broth add solid Scottish substance still.

But this is not a crusade, van Dijk stresses. And what he calls "back food" such as Black Forest gateau still be found alongside natural yoghurt fruit fools, sorbets and water ices made with fresh pureed pineapple, apricots and blackcurrants.

A leaflet in every bedroom invites guests to take the option of a "health-conscious" diet on the menu, an asterisk identifies which these are. One night, roast Border lamb with apricot pilaf, on another spicy baked trout, guinea fowl

with watercress or Mexican chicken. What makes these meals "health-conscious"? Well, for Mexican chicken the joints are rolled in wholemeal flour, then served in polyunsaturated vegetable oil. The sauce, of hot chill, onions, tomato purée, orange, pineapple and a little brown sugar spiced with cinnamon and garlic, is thickened by only the finest dusting of wholemeal flour. The sweetness now unconsciously expected by many restaurant customers is mainly derived from the fruitose in the assorted fruits.

Although van Dijk's health-conscious meals have only been a feature of the Hotel Hydro's menu for a single season he is sufficiently encouraged by the results—around 20 per cent of the hotel's guests choose one of these dishes each night—to consider extending this section of the menu soon and to develop special expertise in rather more esoteric fields, such as diets for coeliacs.

It is still rare for hoteliers to heed the advice of the health professionals, but van Dijk modestly deprecates his breaking new ground. "I wouldn't say it's a heroic effort, but who wants to kill one's customers?"

Anice Alexander

'What I like about the new vegetarian cooks is their cheek'

THE best party for many a year came my way at the launch of Jean Conil's *Cuisine Vegetarienne*.

Francis Chatterons (59.55). It takes at first a suspension of belief to associate French food with vegetarianism. Or it did in me. When I was given a copy of this book I thought, "What a book to be conned. Yet as M. Conil points out in his introduction there has always been great respect for the cooking of vegetables in France. They have that splendid tradition of serving the vegetables on a separate plate—and sometimes as a separate course. In practice, I wish were more common here."

M. Conil also detects that a vegetarian movement in France is almost a spin-off from nouvelle cuisine and the movement towards healthier food. He links it too with a disgust for EEC policies, meat, butter mountains and milk lakes and believes that farmers are being steered in the wrong direction by their governments.

French vegetarian cooking has a headstart on other nations for there exists that huge range and great variety of cheeses, as well as cream, fraiche and fromage frais (to substitute quark, for either really does quite do). The flavours derived from such dairy produce in the cooking of vegetables is an unending boon.

M. Conil is also aware and grateful for the fact that French colonies, pointing out that we are not the only ones to incorporate dishes into our cuisine from subject nations. He talks warmly of the delicate flavours in Vietnamese cooking and incorporates Far Eastern fruits and vegetables into his recipes.

But how do the recipes in this book differ from the usual vegetarian cookery book? The first chapter on vegetable dishes which are translated into that hideous word "dip" begins with the old favourite—tapenade. This is

sometimes translated, as it is here, as black olive paste or puree. Yet tapenade comes from the Provençal *tapeno*, meaning capers, and it includes anchovies and tunny fish. Quite powerful flavours, but they do not dominate the olives and capers. Rather, they all amalgamate into a heady fusion.

How can the vegetarian interpretation compete with it? My own recipe of olives, capers, garlic, lemon juice and olive oil pleases me, but it is nowhere near as powerful as the classic tapenade. Jean Conil adds to the above an almost reckless amount of ingredients and conflicting flavours, but it works wonderfully. (See recipe below.)

The amount of ingredients then is one major difference. A purée of flageolet and one of avocado each have eleven ingredients while my own

with watercress or Mexican chicken.

AMSTERDAM'S Onder de rook is unusual, if not unique, in being a top quality restaurant based in a squat. It occupies two simple and comfortably furnished rooms in a run-down tenement not far from the Rijksmuseum. There is no sign or menu outside and the exterior is dilapidated. The restaurant is run as a collective by three principals and eleven part-timers; and offers a nouvelle cuisine menu which changes daily.

We paid 156 Dutch guilders (about £37) for a meal for three with two bottles of Touraine wine. Before we ordered we were brought a small portion of house pate with a field salad of donkey's ears and chervil. As hors d'oeuvre we ordered bacon, endive salad, fish soufflé with lemon and seaweed. For a restaurant which has a small portion of house pate with a field salad of donkey's ears and chervil. As hors d'oeuvre we ordered bacon, endive salad, fish soufflé with lemon and seaweed. For a restaurant which has a small portion of house pate with a field salad of donkey's ears and chervil. As hors d'oeuvre we ordered bacon, endive salad, fish soufflé with lemon and seaweed.

For Sunday courses had a similarly precise tenderness. Young chicken "kuiken" was roasted with rosemary in a pig's bladder which trapped the juices and flavours. A salmon steak en papillote was barely but exactly cooked with a julienne that

was only just no longer crunchy. Sweetbreads and mushrooms arrived with a light butter and wine sauce.

The vegetables from the nearby Albert Cuypmarket were carefully adjusted to suit the main dishes. The wine list is short, and could hardly be otherwise in a restaurant of marginal legality, but the sweets were excellent. We enjoyed pear with goat cheese, and a lemon parfait with two sauces: kiwi fruit and quince.

According to Maarten, the chef, the growing success of the restaurant, its reputation being spread by word of mouth alone, means that it is likely to move to legitimate premises. Two years' development under the shelter of the black economy should be a good foundation for a restaurant which sets store by conviviality and experiment.

Meanwhile food lovers who are not Dutch tax inspectors should telephone Amsterdam 783383 to reserve a table. The restaurant was open only 22 and it is shut on Mondays and Tuesdays, so it is advisable to book in advance.

Adam Hodgkin

The Good Food Guide returns next week.

1 pinch grated nutmeg or mace

2 tablespoons soy sauce

2 tablespoons wine vinegar

1 tablespoon yeast extract

2 fl oz (60ml) olive oil

Pinch dried tarragon

1 teaspoon raw cane sugar or black treacle

Freshly ground black pepper

Combine all the ingredients in a blender and liquidise to a paste. Alternatively, mince the ingredients to a coarse paste. Then beat the mixture to blend the ingredients thoroughly.

This pate will keep well, stored in the fridge. Serve on wholemeal toast or as a filling for tomatoes or cucumbers. For a lighter mixture, add 4 fl oz (120ml) whipped cream. The dish can then be served as a dip.

● La Pate de Roquefort au Celeri-Rave

½lb (225g) celeriac, peeled and sliced

4oz (100g) cream cheese

½lb (225g) Roquefort cheese

1 good pinch grated nutmeg and celery seeds

Freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon sea salt

1 tablespoon freshly chopped parsley or coriander leaves

3 fl oz (90ml) ruby port

Boil the celeriac in enough water to just cover for 10 minutes, or until soft. Drain and puree through a sieve over a bowl. Blend the puree with the cream cheese and Roquefort. Reheat to bubbling point and either liquidise or pass through a sieve again. When the mixture is cold, season and blend in the chopped parsley. Add the port and mix well. Serve in individual ramekins. Garnish with celery and serve with hot wholemeal toast.

● La Tapena aux Olives Noires

½lb (225g) large black olives, stoned

½lb (225g) shelled walnuts

2oz (50g) large pickled capers

4 hard-boiled egg yolks

4 raw egg yolks

1 small green chilli

2 cloves garlic

Colin Spencer

Fiat and Ford... there is certainly a romance but no wedding bells just yet



NOTEBOOK

Edited by Hamish McRae

ITALY is agog with the notion that Fiat might be merging with Ford. The companies agree that they are having talks but won't explain what they are about. Their reticence has encouraged the Italian scribes to

redouble their efforts to marry the two.

That is the story so far, and there is a simple, logical, single sentence conclusion to the chapter. It would be that the two companies are collaborating in some aspect of development, like common floor-pans, engines or transmissions. Given the enormous cost of developing new products, and the similar size of the main European producers, joint development is the only sensible way forward in the European market.

The Japanese marriage to produce completely new cars, not just new engines or new bodies, in ever shorter time scales. But the European producers, with six of them (Fiat, Ford, GM, Peugeot, Citroen, VW and Renault), all with some 12 per cent of the market, cannot afford the luxuries that is possible in the US domestic market, or in Japan.

It would be logical for any two to try to develop costs. It is logical too, for Ford and

Fiat to join together because by the standards of the highly competitive EEC countries, they do not compete very directly.

Sure, they produce a not dissimilar range of cars, with Fiat skewed only slightly towards the small end, but they sell them in rather different markets. Fiat does not do well in Northern Europe; Ford does not do well in the Mediterranean region.

But in the end there will have to be substantial rationalisation of European car capacity. In the end, mergers look inevitable. And that is why the Fiat/Ford talks have a tantalising air: if not now, maybe later?

Chart miss

A SUDDEN plunge in the dollar took place yesterday, carrying it down to DM 3.1225 and pushing the pound up more than 3 cents to \$1.2360.

Considered reaction to the latest statement by Paul Volcker? Some new US economic indicators showing even slower growth? Another gaffe by the President?

Actually, no. In so far as there was any sensible explanation of the inexplicable (see next note) it was that the dollar, which had previously been strengthening, just failed to cross the DM3.20 point on the charts. This failure is apparently of significance to the chartist set, and accordingly the currency fell back again. So there.

More interesting, in a way, is the dog that hasn't barked: the way the British markets have managed to take those awful money supply figures in their stride without the carnage in the gilt market that might have been expected.

Next month's money supply figures will receive considerable help not just from any unwinding of those special factors which supposedly contributed to last month's surge in bank borrowing. They will also be helped by the capital-raising

activities of the banks themselves.

These new floating notes count as net non-deposit liabilities in the money figures. The effect will be to transfer a block of roughly £1 billion out of sterling M3. Since the pool of sterling M3 is over £110 billion, that means that — other things being equal — money supply will be reduced by nearly 1 per cent. It may not turn out as simple as that but you can see why the Bank of England is so keen on this method the banks have chosen to boost their capital ratios.

Helpful idea

A COMMONS committee has just been set up to look at the mismanagement of the dollar and the actions which should be taken both nationally and internationally to deal with it.

Such a sweeping brief does rather raise the retort that if they can explain why the dollar has been so strong

they will have done better than the entire international financial community. But it is a helpful idea, none the less.

This is because discussion of exchange policy (such as it is) has for too long been stifled by a set of practices which date back to the days of the fixed exchange rate, painfully defended by intervention by the Bank of England.

For example, even now we cannot get a precise figure of Bank intervention in the currency markets, though the case for such secrecy died long ago. You could justify, perhaps, some delay in publishing such figures on the grounds that the market should be kept guessing; but not the obsessive secrecy that still surrounds the matter.

Take another example. It would be very helpful to know what assumption the Treasury makes on the exchange rate and the oil price in its calculations of likely revenue from oil. It would not tell the mar-

ket anything it could not reasonably guess. But it would remove, or rather clarify, one uncertainty in public finances, without putting HMG to any particular disadvantage.

If the committee does manage to rubbish a bit of the "state secret" aspect of exchange rate policy it will have done a useful job — and if it discovers why exchange rates move in the way they do, its members can doubtless pick up a few lucrative consultancies in the City to boot.

Brokers' delight

TWAS a famous victory: the Stock Exchange Council's change of heart over the share ceiling and the new tap of shares will give heart to the medium-sized and small brokers.

For a market which prides itself on dealing skills it always appeared odd that the price of individual members' shares should not be left to market forces. Obviously, the

exchange had to pacify the Bank of England that the costs of entry for outsiders would not be too great. But it always seemed extremely unlikely that share prices could soar to such heights that anybody who was committed to trading would be put off. After all, think what some banks have paid for second-line brokers.

Many of the members of the smaller firms who have successfully led the lobby have been motivated by money. But they also appreciated that £10,000 or rather £100,000 for a new outsider — was hardly a barrier.

Whether the changes are enough to persuade members to carry the crucial vote is another matter. But the danger is now that if they throw out the new proposals the council could very easily steam ahead with the other rule changes. This would leave members for the time being with worthless 5p shares — and not a penny in their pockets. The council writ now looks secure.

Contract yet to be ratified but remaining jobs look safe

Bangkok throws £385 m lifeline to Leyland Bus

By David Simpson, Business Correspondent

BLA struggling Leyland Bus subsidiary was yesterday thrown an invaluable lifeline when it was given notice of a £385 million contract from Thailand to re-equip Bangkok's bus fleet.

The Bangkok Mass Transit Authority announced it had chosen a Leyland Bus-led consortium to supply 4,000 new vehicles and restructure the city's transport system over the next five years.

Leyland Bus adopted a more cautious attitude to the contract, pointing out that it still a matter for negotiation and was unlikely to be formally awarded until October or November. If and when the details of the contract are agreed, it must still be endorsed by the Thai government.

But barring disaster, it does appear that Leyland, which tendered for the contract last year in competition with four other bidders from Europe and Japan, is well down the path to gaining its largest-ever order for buses.

Leyland's partners in the consortium are the National Bus Company, due to be privatised this year, and the London-based consultants, MVA, reflecting the fact that the contract is not only for the supply of vehicles but includes building maintenance depots, establishing a training programme, and reorganising the transit authority's management structure.

On the vehicle side, Leyland will be expected to provide 4,000 ordinary and air-conditioned buses, including 1,800 double-deckers.

A Leyland spokesman said yesterday that it was impossible to state what the Bangkok contract would ultimately mean in employment terms until it has been ratified, but that it would certainly guarantee security for the company's remaining 3,000 work force at three plants, near Preston, in Worthington and in Lowestoft.

Over the last five years, a collapse in UK demand for buses has led to the company cutting its employee level from 8,000 workers, and there have been no signs recently of any recovery in the domestic market.

The UK bus market overall has fallen by half since 1980, with the effects of the general recession compounded first by cuts in public spending and local authority grants, and then most recently by the Transport Bill, which has led local authorities to defer re-equipping or extending their fleets.

Leyland's own share of the declining market slipped badly last year, from 49.7 per cent in 1983 to 46.6 per cent, and the company incurred a substantial loss having claimed its way back to profitability only the previous year. All told, Leyland Vehicles, which incorporates Leyland Bus, recorded a £81 million operating loss last year.

SE members win share rule concessions

By Margaret Pagano, City Correspondent

Stock Exchange members have won the battle to have the controversial £10,000 ceiling on their shares scrapped and the proposed cap of 25 shares at £2,000 each in the exchange withdrawn.

This is a victory for members of the small to medium sized stockbroking firms who have objected to these two key proposals ever since they were outlined in the published white paper in March. The value of the new shares will be left to market forces of supply and demand. Members will be told of the concessions in a letter sent to them today by Sir Nicholas

Goodison, the exchange's chairman. The letter also says that members of the smaller firms, with fewer than 10 partners, will not need to apply to the council for dispensation from the proposed rule requiring existing firms to hold 50 shares. Sir Nicholas admits in the letter that the white paper's "dispensation" proposal had been badly worded and that firms that members will need only their present one-share unit, which is to be split into five.

The council hopes that these concessions will be enough to appease members who will have to vote on the new membership rule changes on June 4.

Wellcome's Vane quits

By James Ertlichman, Chemicals Correspondent

Sir John Vane, the Nobel Prize winning research director of the Wellcome pharmaceutical group, has decided to resign and will leave the company in September.

His departure from the company after 12 years has not been fully explained, but it must come as an enormous blow to Wellcome, which has long been a two-headed research organisation, with a research arm and a pharmaceutical arm. Sir James Black, who discovered the two most profit-

able drugs in the world, resigned as Wellcome's director of therapeutic research in June, 1984. He has since returned to the academic world.

It is understood that Sir John, who is 58, has also been working for another drug company and will return to academic life. His research into the mechanism of how aspirin really works, which won him the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1982, was begun when he was a professor of pharmacology at the Royal College of Surgeons in London.

Camoy calls for ban

By Margaret Pagano

LORD Camoy, vice chairman of Barclays Merchant Bank, yesterday urged the Government to act immediately to stop all off-market trading in non-stock exchange members.

He said the Government should either introduce legislation or a penal tax on all foreign and UK institutions which are making markets outside the Exchange. "If the Government really cared about investor protection and the competitiveness of London as an international market then it should stop all the firms which are trading outside. It is a silly, sloppy thinking to believe that London's doors can be opened without the danger of the central market fragmenting," he said. "Everyone should be able to compete on an equal footing."

All politicians should be concerned that the Stock Exchange could bring forward big bang if it believes that the danger becomes too great," he added. Investors are not being protected," Lord Camoy, is also chief executive of the Barclays de Zoete Wedd group, one of the largest securities to merchant banking groups created in the City's revolution.

So far the Government has taken little notice of the Stock Exchange's threats that unless it moves swiftly to prevent further off-market trading the Exchange could bring forward the big bang timetable.

But pressure within the Exchange is mounting, and it could only take the entry of another major financial institution, such as one of the giant US broking houses, for it to carry out its threat.

Lord Camoy said the planned merger between the three groups, which will leave de Zoete and Wedd partners with a 25 per cent stake, is moving fast.

Obstacles on Royal's path to recovery

By Mary Brasier

Earthquakes in Chile, hailstorms in Australia, and a lot of car crashes in the UK have thrown Royal Insurance off its expected recovery path in the opening three months of 1985.

The group yesterday unveiled losses of £37.3 million for the first quarter, up from £20.4 million last year. Underwriting results deteriorated in every single area of the group's general insurance business, producing an overall loss of £40 million against £13.1 million last year. Life profits were £5.9 million.

The chief executive, Mr Alan Horsford, blamed weather events and a continuing inadequacy of many prices. Big price increases across the range of Royal's portfolio are being put through, and Mr Horsford is still confident that Royal will start to show better results in the final quarter of 1985 and certainly in 1986, after a disastrous year in 1984.

UK motor premiums are

being increased to meet a largely unexplained escalation of claims. Royal UK losses rose from £7 million to £12 million, partly reflecting a 12.5 per cent jump in motor claims, and some motorists will be facing 13 per cent higher premiums as a result. A May rate increase averaging 5 per cent was brought forward to March, and another of about seven per cent for comparatively higher risk drivers will follow on the first of next month.

Bad results from Australia and the international division reflect onerous disasters, like bush fires, hailstorms, and a Chilean earthquake which added nearly £2 million to losses alone. Canada continues to suffer from the need to strengthen reserves against rising demands for liability cases, and losses have increased by £5 million.

Royal shares jumped 23p to 611p as the City looked forward to profits of perhaps £45 million this year despite the initial setback.

Intasun in £100m deal with Ramada

By Geoffrey Gibbs

Mr Harry Goodman's Intasun Leisure Group is making a determined move into the buoyant UK hotels market by joining forces with the American hotels combine Ramada.

The two companies yesterday announced the formation of a joint venture company with £100 million to invest in up to 10 hotels in London and the provinces over the next four years.

The alliance is a further mark of the desirability of being expressed in the mark of the widespread confidence being expressed in the UK hotels industry, particularly in London. Earlier this month, Holiday Inns, the world's largest hotels group, unveiled a planned £160 million UK investment as part of a huge European expansion programme.

Intasun's link up with Ramada comes only six months after the group was thwarted in a bid for the Comfort Ho-

tels chain and is consistent with its policy of diversifying away from reliance on the British package holidays markets.

At present, Intasun's direct involvement in the hotels business is confined to the 650 room Barbican City Hotel in London, acquired in March for £7.5 million. But the group is also acquiring two hotels in Majorca as part of the Global Holidays takeover, and has linked with Ledbrooke to establish resort hotels in the Mediterranean.

Mr Goodman said the joint venture company — expected to be 80 per cent owned by Intasun — hoped to announce its first purchase this summer.

Intasun is experiencing a "mad rush of late bookings" for the summer season and expects to end the year with a marginal improvement in carryings the directors said yesterday. Current bookings are down 11 per cent compared with the industry figure of 25 per cent.

Posgate's 'facetious note'

By Mary Brasier

A note from the Lloyd's underwriter, Mr Ian Posgate, to Mr Ken Grob asking for a picture was a "facetious remark with no serious intent," Mr Posgate claimed yesterday.

The memo was raised by counsel for Lloyd's on the third day of the appeal hearing against findings by Lloyd's disciplinary committee that Mr Posgate should be expelled

from the insurance market for impropriety.

Mr Peter Scott, QC for Lloyd's, said gifts of a Pissarro painting worth £74,000 and shares in a Swiss bank to Mr Posgate were of a size and given in circumstances which meant they were not "just the equivalent of a gold watch for services rendered." Lloyd's has said they were intended to influence Mr Posgate's underwriting.

Murdoch to sell papers in US for TV empire

From Alex Brummer in Washington

The publisher, Mr Rupert Murdoch, yesterday signalled that he intends to sell his two largest newspapers in the United States, the New York Post and the Chicago Sun Times, to meet Federal requirements which prevent him owning television stations and newspapers in the same city.

An adviser to Mr Murdoch, Mr Howard Rubinstein, said that Mr Murdoch "would not be seeking a waiver" from the Federal Communications Commission which might allow him to maintain control of both the TV and newspaper interests. Mr Rubinstein also said that Mr Murdoch was "preparing his application for American citizenship in the normal way" and rejected suggestions that the Australian publisher could seek to expedite the process. The FCC has insisted that major television stations are in American hands.

The decision to sell his major big city newspapers comes less than a week after the public sale of his 20th Century Fox partner, Mr Marvin Davis, paid some \$2 billion for six television stations divested by the Multimedia Group. He has agreed to sell one of the stations to the Hearst newspaper group for \$450 million.

But in taking on the Multimedia stations Mr Murdoch is also assuming a heavy debt burden — in the form of "junk" bonds which were used by Multimedia's management to take the firm private last year. Analysts believe that among the reasons for Mr Murdoch's decision to sell the two newspapers and the Village Voice magazine is the need to raise cash to reduce the debt burden which has taken on with his two most recent purchases — the 20th Century Fox and Multimedia.

Neither the New York or Chicago newspapers are thought to be money spinners. The sensational New York Post is believed to be losing up to \$10 million a year and the Chicago Sun Times — which is involved in an expensive circulation war with the Chicago Tribune — is reportedly only marginally profitable.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Stores' defence

THE Debenhams chairman, Mr Robert Thornton, is planning a pre-emptive strike against rumoured attempts to takeover the stores group. Debenhams is negotiating a big acquisition which it hopes will thwart a hostile bid. Discussions are well advanced and Mr Thornton hopes to announce a deal in the next few weeks. Details page 23.

APPLICATION lists for the £600 million offering of shares on British Aerospace close this morning.

THERE was a sharp upturn in the rate of UK company failures last month, the credit insurance company, Trade Indemnity reported yesterday, with 381 businesses going bankrupt, 12.2 per cent more than in April last year. This takes the total insolvencies so far in 1985 to a level 5.4 per cent higher than over the first four months of 1984.

THIS month many banks have abandoned the free Eurocheque encashment card in favour of the uniform Eurocheque, for which they charge. Weekend Money tomorrow explains what the bank is offering what, and the advantages of the new scheme.

Minister is twisting the statistics on jobs, says Labour

By David Simpson and Michael

Claims by the Employment Secretary, Mr Tom King, that unemployment levels owe much to the record size of the UK workforce, were immediately challenged yesterday by the Shadow employment spokesman, Mr John Prescott.

Mr Prescott's charges form a proudest to a renewed attack on the government's economic policies which Labour is to mount next week, through a Commons debate on the decline of British manufacturing industries.

Speaking at an advertising awards lunch, Mr King said that preliminary indications showed that the labour force rose in the year to June, 1984, by 430,000 people, to a record of 26,450,000.

This increase was the largest since records began in 1971. "These figures show the size of the challenge we face in bringing down unemployment."

"Although the number of jobs in the economy is rising rapidly, by more than a third of a million alone in 1984, we need to progress even faster if we are to cope with the remarkable rise in people joining the labour market."

Mr Prescott poured scorn on Mr King's arguments, and in a letter sent last night to the Employment Secretary, points out that 1984 was the first year in which the size of the

labour force rose since the Tories came to power in 1979. During the 1974/79 Labour Government, Mr Prescott wrote, the size of the labour force rose by 882,000 while between 1980 and 1983, it fell by almost 200,000 people. Over the same period, he adds, unemployment doubled.

"I would be grateful for your observations on these figures as the increasingly loose use of statistics by members of the government of which your speech today is just the latest example can so easily be confused with facts."

The lead in next week's debate will be taken by the Opposition Trade and Industry spokesman, Mr John Smith, who will base his assault on the UK's £4 billion trade deficit in manufactured goods. Labour is likely to emphasise the crucial importance of a strong manufacturing base to create long-term wealth and provide the source of business for many new jobs in the service industries.

The government has been under intense attack recently for failing to appreciate the necessity of maintaining a manufacturing base and for placing too much reliance upon the expansion of service industries. The GEC chief, Lord Weinstock, and the ICI chairman, Mr John Harvey-Jones, recently dismissed as "absolute rubbish" government beliefs that the growth of service industries would outpace the decline in the manufacturing industry.

The Royal Bank of Scotland Group plc

INTERIM RESULTS: PRE-TAX PROFITS UP 34%

SUMMARY OF KEY FIGURES (Unaudited)	6 months ended	6 months ended	12 months ended
	31.3.85	31.3.84	30.9.84
PROFIT BEFORE TAXATION	£75.9m	£56.8m	£131.3m
PROFIT ATTRIBUTABLE TO ORDINARY SHAREHOLDERS	£42.1m	£38.1m	£97.5m
EARNINGS PER 25p ORDINARY SHARE	17.8p	16.1p	32.0p
DIVIDEND PER 25p ORDINARY SHARE	3.6p	3.3p	8.5p

Over the past three years we have made excellent progress towards the merger of our two banks which we hope will take effect on 30 September this year. In addition we have

- ✱ achieved a major increase in our customer base
- ✱ acquired the Charterhouse Group
- ✱ launched a car insurance service

We are confident that the earnings of the new Royal Bank of Scotland should continue to improve in the future.

Michael Herries
Chairman

The Royal Bank of Scotland plc Williams & Glyn's Bank plc



ANNOUNCEMENT

It has come to our notice that unsolicited invitations to invest in a Canadian company named "ICI Industrial Minerals Limited" are being distributed in the UK by a firm known as "B.A. Investment Advisory Services", of Amsterdam, Holland.

We wish to make it known that "ICI Industrial Minerals Limited" has no connection whatsoever with Imperial Chemical Industries PLC or any of its subsidiaries.

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in common.

They're going places. Some quickly. Some
not quite so quickly.

But they're all going places. With a little bit
of help from us at 3i.

We've always had time and money for the
man who has the acumen and ambition to build
a successful business.

He is the kind of man who is prepared to
stand or fall by his own judgement. Because
he believes in his ability.

And we have more experience in recognising
the ability of entrepreneurs than anyone else.

Words? No, action.

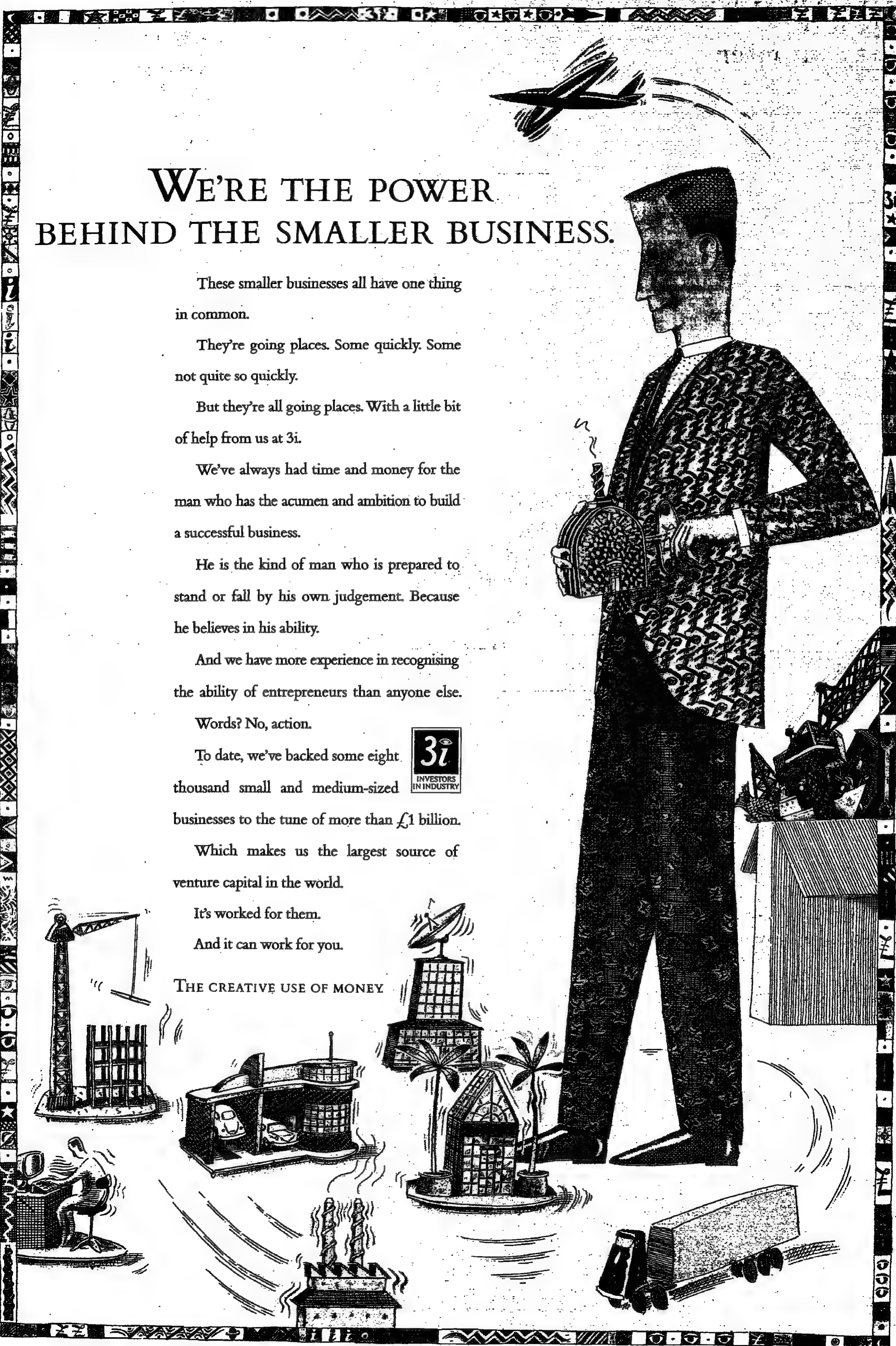
To date, we've backed some eight
thousand small and medium-sized
businesses to the tune of more than £1 billion.

Which makes us the largest source of
venture capital in the world.

It's worked for them.

And it can work for you.

THE CREATIVE USE OF MONEY



Britain may join Japan on new computer

By Peter Large, Technology Correspondent

An official British delegation is to spend next week in Tokyo beginning negotiations which could lead to an Anglo-Japanese partnership — inevitably aimed against the United States — in a crucial area of 1990s technology.

They will be discussing a Japanese request for the two nations to join in developing the fifth generation of computers. The aim of the competing fifth generation research in the US, Japan, and Britain is to create computers not merely hundreds of times more powerful than today's but capable of coping with human-style reasoning.

The Japanese hope is that Britain will supply the software — Japan's weak point — while the Japanese researchers concentrate on the hardware design.

Mr Brian Oakley, director of Britain's fifth generation programme, the Government's £250 million Alvey project, was cautious yesterday about the prospects. He emphasised that the possibility of collaboration depended on solid agreement being reached on how to share the results.

The talks will not be top level at this stage. The UK Government side is led by Mr Roger Hird, the Alvey project's administration director, and the industrial side by Mr Derek McLaughlin, ICL's head of group technical strategy.

Other firms represented include British Telecom, Thorn EMI, and the software company SDL. But Britain's biggest electronics groups, GEC

and Plessey, are not included. Mr Derek Roberts, GEC's technical director, said yesterday that GEC was all for free exchange of scientific research, "but this sort of thing I don't call partnership." He thought it could only result in British software being used to sell Japanese products. The talks will involve not only the Japanese Industry Ministry, MITI, but all the big six Japanese technology firms as well.

If the talks did eventually lead to solid agreement, the political implications would, of course, be deep. Even just on the commercial front, as Mr Hird said yesterday, "if anyone is to be a victim of this sort of deal, it would be IBM, though that's not our fault." (The UK subsidiary of IBM is included in Alvey work).

At least it is clear that the Japanese are keen. Long before the Japanese government's official fifth generation programme was launched in April 1982, they had been seeking access to Britain's software expertise. Once the Alvey project began, they asked again — but saying that they only wanted to talk to British academics, not British firms.

They claimed that their research project is not commercially viable, whereas the Alvey programme depends on close collaboration between consortia of firms and university research teams.

Therefore, they have made a concession in accepting a response to their invitation that is based on the Government's official Alvey team. And to re-emphasise that point, the British delegation includes no academics.

Fowler will sweeten the pill for doctors

James Erlichman on government's volte face on banned drugs

THE drugs industry in Britain cannot quite believe its luck and is unable to decide this week whether first, to kiss a few industrial doctors or to caress its own wallet.

Only a month after its noisy public conception, the limited list banning more than 2,000 drugs from NHS prescription, may prove stillborn.

The Health Secretary, Mr Norman Fowler, who so recently championed the limited list as a model of efficacy and economy, is now offering doctors the backdoor chance to prescribe any banned drugs they like. The appeals procedure they must follow is so hassle-free that it looks positively designed to encourage doctors to return to their old prescribing habits.

A GP needs now only to decide in his own mind that a banned drug is best for a patient, write out a NHS prescription, and explain his decision, in the briefest terms, after the event. Sitting in judgment upon his prescribing habits will be a local committee of his own peers (four GPs and two hospital doctors).

This panel, which will be chosen by doctors themselves, will have no obligation to explain or even communicate their judgment to Mr Fowler's men at the ministry. All will be done behind the closed doors of the consulting room.

What incentive will these men have to challenge the prescribing habits of one of their friends," said one London consultant. "Even the hospital doctors on the committee, who might support the limited list, will be mindful that they rely on the GPs they judge for future patient referrals."

Powerful lobbying pressure from the medical profession alone explains the discreet, but near complete, volte face of Mr Fowler. The powerful drug industry, in this case, had been impotent. The vitriolic advertising campaign it waged against the limited list only enraged the govern-

ment. What the drug industry failed to achieve with its blunderbuss techniques, the doctors have quietly done with a scalpel.

This explains why the drug industry has adopted a frozen pose of gleeful but profound silence since the appeals procedure was offered to the doctors.

Privately, the drug companies believe a substantial portion of the \$75 million they expected to lose in sales can now be clawed back if doctors are gently urged to write blacklisted prescriptions. Any public glowing, however, would encourage Mr Fowler to retaliate on other fronts.

It would also raise the

hackles of prescribing doctors, who generate 80 per cent of the industry's £1.6 billion sales, but mistrust its profit motive. Drug industry reps, who knock on surgery doors, will have to be coached toward subtle ways of convincing GPs to ignore the limited list in the interests of their patients.

The government has been forced to climb down because its motives for introducing the limited list were always flawed

More likely to benefit are companies like the US firms, Upjohn and Wyeth, whose banned tranquillisers do, in the eyes of some GPs, have genuine if slight advantages over the generic drugs on the Department of Health's approved list.

One drug company admitted that Mr Fowler's concessions had put the industry into a real profit-crunching quandary. Since the limited list came into force on April 1 many companies have slashed the price, and launched advertising campaigns to promote the sale of banned over-the-counter products directly to the customer.

The real power of the doctors' lobby in forcing Mr Fowler to back down is still something of a mystery. The

drug industry, which would have been weaned away from dependence on overly promoted, off-patent wares, will not now have to search as hard to find profit from real therapeutic breakthroughs of the future.

Admittedly, some companies like the Swiss giant, Hoffmann-La Roche, will not gain much from the new concessions. Roche is best known for its over-priced, out-of-patent and now blacklisted tranquillisers, Valium and Librium. Since much cheaper and equivalent generic versions of the drugs have existed for years, it is hard to imagine even the most supine local appeals panel agreeing to their continued use by doctors.

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Mr Norman Fowler: a backward step

British Medical Association successfully organised backbench Tory MPs who threatened a revolt against the limited list. And we now know that their protest was defused after the BMA got Mr Fowler, in confidential meetings late in March, to make his promise of an appeals procedure.

The BMA also threatened to drag Mr Fowler and the

DESS through the courts, arguing that a judicial review would prove that the very idea of a limited list was illegal.

Squeezed between the two senior professions, Mr Fowler probably thought it prudent to take a backward step. Or you could say that even ministers, with trousers down and told to cough, can be made to listen.

UK falls behind in banking league

By Peter Rodgers, City Editor

British banks' share of the international banking business is only fourth in the international league table, behind the US, Japan and even France, in spite of London's position as the biggest banking centre. The British banks' share also declined last year and on one method of counting Japan is now the biggest international bank lender after aggressively grabbing market share.

Figures published today by the Bank for International Settlements for the first time give a detailed breakdown of international banking markets by country of ownership of the banks concerned. Previous analyses have shown that London is the biggest international banking centre with a quarter of the entire worldwide business. But a large part of this is done by offshoots of foreign banks.

The figures also show that Japanese banks rapidly increased their share of business last year. Although the total figure for bank lending put the US at the head of the league table with Japan a little behind, the Japanese may in fact have become the largest international bank lender in deals between foreign affiliates of individual banks are excluded.

The BIS, the bank run by central banks, says that because of the large amount of business shown in the figures between subsidiaries of US banks around the world Japan's international loans in December 1984 were "as large as, or slightly larger than, those of US banks."

But on the total lending figures, the US has \$615 billion

or 38 per cent of the business. Japan has 23.5 per cent, French banks have 9 per cent, British banks have 7 per cent and German banks have 6.5 per cent.

Swiss banks have only 3.4 per cent but this excludes a large amount of Swiss business which it counted in the figures would probably give them same size business as the UK banks, which had \$161 billion of international loans outstanding at the end of December.

This was a drop of nearly \$10 billion from a year earlier. Unlike the American banks, 80 per cent of whose loans were to affiliates, only 12 per cent of UK bank loans were to "related offices," says the BIS.

The most intriguing aspect of the figures is the way that Japanese banks have raised their market share in international banking. All the world as if they were attacking the car or video recorder markets. Japanese banks raised their international lending \$63 billion to almost \$514 billion while US banks' market share fell over \$16 billion, mainly because of the crisis over Continental Illinois. Japan was particularly prominent in raising its loans to governments and to "non-bank" institutions, which includes companies.

The BIS says that US and other major banks were able to attract simple deposits from outside the banking system, more than they wished to re-lend to final borrowers. They therefore used the money to finance banks of other nationalities on the loan market, which re-lent the money to final users.

Exhibition centre boost

By Michael Smith, Industrial Editor

New plans have been unveiled to double the size of the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham at a cost of about £100 million over the next two decades.

The centre, which covers 125,000 square yards of indoor space for national and international exhibitions, generates about £60 million a year in revenue and supports almost 3,000 jobs in the blighted West Midlands.

The NEC chief executive, Terry Golding, said yesterday that he expected a further 4,000 jobs to be created over the next 20 years if the scheme to double the site went ahead. The proposals being approved by the NEC directors would add a further 125,000 square yards.

Outline planning has already been sought for the first phase of the development and it is hoped that the additional space will be available in 1988.

The NEC is pushing ahead with its large-scale expansion plans following an independent report forecasting "regular pressure" for space in the coming years and steady growth in demand for exhibition space.

The report, by PA Management Consultants, recommended "urgent action" be taken when the NEC is forced to face an unprecedented sequence of major international trade fairs including the motor show.

Shares unfrozen

By Geoffrey Gibbs

The Scottish courts yesterday agreed to lift restrictions on a block of two million House of Fraser shares enabling the holders to accept the 400p-a-share cash offer being made by the Egyptian Al Fayed brothers.

The court decision came as the Al Fayed brothers disclosed that their \$615 million takeover offer had received sufficient levels of acceptance to enable them to acquire all outstanding shares in the company compulsorily.

The 1.3 per cent stake held by German bankers, R. Daus and Co., was frozen by the Scottish courts in 1982 after Fraser complained that it was unable to discover the ultimate ownership of the holding. The order prevented transfer of the shares and froze voting rights and dividend payments on the stock.

Daus applied for the restrictions to be lifted after the Al Fayed brothers made their offer earlier this year.

The removal of the restrictions will enable Daus to pocket £3 million by accepting the offer, and takes the Al Fayed brothers ever closer to full control of the Harrods department stores group.

The brothers' financial advisers, led by Kleinwort Benson, announced yesterday that acceptance of the takeover offer together with shares already owned by the Al Fayed brothers lifted their holding to 95.4 per cent of the issued share capital.

AIT is leaving the offer open for further acceptances and has meanwhile increased its offers for Fraser's preference shares after meeting mixed success with its original terms.

FIRST QUARTER RESULTS FOR 1985 Royal Insurance

The results for the first quarter are set out below; these should not be taken as providing a reliable indication of the outcome for the year as a whole.

	3 months to 31 March 1985 (unaudited) £m	3 months to 31 March 1984 (unaudited) £m	Year 1984 (audited) £m
General Insurance:			
Premiums Written	712.5	523.4	2,268.4
Underwriting Balance	-139.9	-101.6	-347.4
Investment Income allocated to General Insurance operations	72.5	54.7	237.4
General Insurance Result ..	-67.4	-46.9	-110.0
Long-term Insurance Profit ..	5.9	4.9	20.7
Investment Income attributable to Capital and Reserves	21.9	18.0	87.2
Share of Associated Companies' Profits	2.3	3.6	13.3
Profit/Loss before Taxation ..	-37.3	-20.4	11.2
Less Taxation	11.3	1.3	17.6
	(credit)	(credit)	
Minority Interests	-0.2	0.0	-0.4
Net Loss	-25.8	-19.1	-6.0
Earnings per share — See Note ..	10.9p (loss)	8.0p (loss)	2.5p (loss)
Capital and Reserves	£1,760m	£1,604m	£1,830m

Note: Earnings per share have been adjusted for the one for four scrip issue made in June 1984.

EXCHANGE RATES

Foreign currencies have been translated according to our normal practice at approximately the average rates of exchange ruling during the period. The principal rates were:—

USA	\$1.11	\$1.44	\$1.33
Canada	\$1.50	\$1.80	\$1.73
Australia	\$1.48	\$1.54	\$1.52
Netherlands	Fls4.09	Fls4.38	Fls4.27

The pre-tax result has been adversely affected by £6.3m due to changes in exchange rates; the underwriting balance being worsened by £20.2m, with investment income and Associated Companies benefiting by £13.9m.

INVESTMENT INCOME

Total investment income of £94.4m increased in sterling terms by 29.6%; allowing for the changes in rates of exchange the growth was almost 11%.

GENERAL INSURANCE

Premium income rose by 36.1% in sterling; allowing for the effect of currency changes, the increase was 18%. Details for the individual operating companies are as follows:—

In the United States the statutory operating ratio after policyholders dividends was 123.1%, down from 128.0% for the first quarter last year. There was a premium volume increase of 23% in commercial lines reflecting the continuation of our firm pricing action helped by the general hardening in that sector of the market. The result in personal lines showed further improvement. Total dollar premium income increased by 18% (13.4% excluding Silvery Corporation).

Premium volume increased by 13.1% in the UK. The winter weather conditions produced a high level of claims on the property accounts costing an estimated £31m, a similar figure to that of the same period last year. The sharp increase in motor claims frequency apparent in the final quarter of 1984 continued, in part reflecting the weather conditions.

In Canada the modest improvement in the commercial lines business was more than offset by a substantial deterioration in the personal automobile line resulting from continued premium inadequacy combined with adverse changes in the legal environment. Premium growth in local terms of 15.2% was largely accounted for by the rate increases on commercial lines business.

The result for Royal Australia was impacted by the storm and bush-fire losses in January and a number of large fire claims. Most classes continue to show strong premium growth, particularly commercial lines.

The deterioration in experience in Western Europe and losses arising from the Chilean earthquake were largely responsible for the worsening in the Royal International result. Total premium growth in local terms was 29.2% (16.8% excluding Velazquez SA.)

Poor experience in the motor account and an increase in the number of large fire losses affected the result for Royal Nederland. Premium income rose by over 10% in local currency terms.

The adverse experience for Royal Re reflected the continuing difficulties in worldwide reinsurance markets.

ROYAL LIFE INSURANCE

New single premium business in the first quarter of 1985 increased by 28% to £29.4m largely due to higher sales of unit-linked business. New annual premiums were £14.3m, somewhat lower than the first quarter of 1984, which was boosted by a surge of pre-budget business. Individual pension business in the UK, influenced by the possibility of change in the taxation treatment of pensions, was extremely buoyant. The long-term insurance profit increased from £4.9m to £5.9m.

Royal Insurance plc,
Group Head Office,
1 Cornhill, London EC3V 3QR.

	3 months to 31st March 1985					3 months to 31st March 1984				
	Premiums Written £m	Under-Writing Balance £m	Allocated Investment Income £m	General Insurance Result £m	Inv. Inc. on Capital & Reserves £m	Pre-tax Profit £m	Premiums Written £m	Under-Writing Balance £m	Allocated Investment Income £m	General Insurance Result £m
Royal USA	315.4	-72.4	37.5	-34.9	7.6	-27.3	206.1	-60.2	26.7	-33.5
Royal UK	179.1	-30.5	15.7	-14.8	3.6	-11.2	158.3	-25.5	14.2	-11.3
Royal Canada	63.8	-17.0	9.2	-7.8	2.3	-5.5	46.2	-9.1	6.8	-2.3
Royal Australia	54.2	-7.2	4.5	-2.7	1.6	-1.1	34.5	1.1	2.6	3.7
Royal International	47.9	-5.0	2.5	-2.5	1.3	-0.3*	34.3	-2.8	1.8	-1.0
Royal Nederland	28.7	-2.9	1.5	-1.4	0.4	-1.0	24.2	-1.4	1.5	0.1
Royal Re	23.4	-4.9	1.6	-3.3	0.7	-2.6	19.8	-3.7	1.1	-2.6
	712.5	-139.9	72.5	-67.4	17.5	-49.0	523.4	-101.6	54.7	-46.9

* The pre-tax profit figures for Royal International include the contribution from their Associated Companies of £0.9m in the first three months of 1985 and £0.8m in the same period of 1984.

Setting store by results

By Mary Brasler

Debenhams yesterday produced the first shot of what may prove to be its defensive fire power with news of an £8 million leap in 1984 profits to £40.7 million. The stores group, which has recently been the City's most persistent bid candidate, set out to show that its retail strategy is already paying off and should move into top gear next year.

The chairman, Mr Robert Thornton, said yesterday that Debenhams would remain independent and that the current results would reinforce institutional support for the company. City support was immediate as Debenhams shares jumped 25p to 318p, valuing the group at around £450 million.

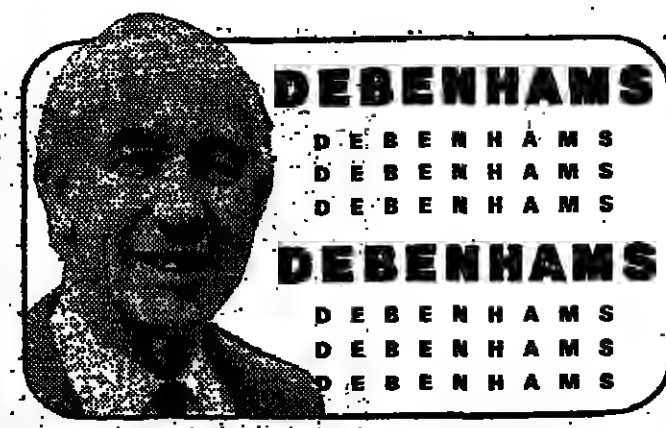
The company is already ahead of budget for the current year and is contemplating further store openings and refurbishments to improve its high street presence. Sales last year rose from £683 million to £728.8 million. Women's fashion and menswear were particularly strong areas for the group, where profits have been helped by a new streamlined organisation into specialist trading companies. But Welbeck Finance, the credit arm, is still providing half Debenhams' profits with a contribution up from £17 million to £20.7 million.

"The board is firmly committed to specialisation, innovation and developed profit responsibility. It has continued to decentralise and to develop autonomous special site trading

businesses both within and outside Debenhams stores," says Mr Thornton. "The results of these developments are being reflected in higher trading profits."

Chipping into the overall profit total were nearly doubled profits from the combination of Harvey Nichols, Hamleys and the Lotus and Hamleys footwear businesses. Hamleys has made its first foray out of Regent Street with a new outlet, recently opened in Bath. Others will follow if the store is a success.

A new Debenhams store opened in Aberdeen last year and eight more were refurbished. A major candidate for upgrading is the Oxford Street store, which will be done up at a cost of £3 million.



Robert Thornton: confident of support

arrangement, there has been a problem of the furnishings of the adapting Mr Harris's selling methods to Debenhams' more upmarket customers. Reorganisation of existing (loss-making) departments was also partly responsible for £8.6 million of extraordinary costs.

Mr Thornton expects the ventures to break even this year, boosting overall group profits. The dividend goes up 1p to 8.5p with a one-for-five free scrip issue.

Equities firm as institutions take a rest

THE MARKETS

The tone in stock markets yesterday remained very firm in front of the British aerospace offer-fiasco, although the institutions were back on the sidelines after Wednesday's brief foray. Most sections finished with a comfortable majority of modest gains, though the oil provided a weak exception behind the sell-off on Wall Street overnight. BP, for example, closed 16p lower at 535p.

But while equity turnover was generally fairly low, bid rumours and trading statements produced pockets of considerable activity. Debenhams were well clear at the top of the day's list of active shares. For them, annual earnings slightly below expectations and a 20 per cent scrip issue were very much a secondary consideration. Speculators continued to pile in on the conviction that a bid is on the way, either from Harris Queensway or Burton Group. After absorbing some profit-taking in mid-session, Debenhams shares ended 25p higher at 318p and the best of the day.

Vickers continued a good market, ignoring a report of US selling, some supposedly on behalf of Saul Steinberg's Reliance Financial Services. The shares rose another 10p to 316p — a three-day advance of 41p.

It was a good day for most of the financial sectors. Composite insurances heaved a huge sigh of relief when Royal Insurance announced that first-quarter losses were £37.3 million, which compared with market forecasts ranging as high as £50 million. Royal surged ahead to 625p, before profit-taking trimmed the rise to 22p at 610p. Smart gains were scored by General Accident and Commercial Union ahead of their quarterly next week.

Lloyds spearheaded an advance by banks following a bullish meeting of analysts on Wednesday night, the shares closing 15p up at 584p (after 590p). Life assurances, by contrast, slipped a few pence, nervously awaiting news of Cabinet discussions on the future of earnings related pensions.

Elsewhere, it proved a most disappointing debut for the new coverings manufacturer Colson, which were underpinned enough to find that the day 100, RPI 368.1 (March) up 6.1 per cent on year.

Equity turnover for Wednesday: bargains, 21,863; value, £346,891 million.

● Tokyo: An afternoon sell-off sent stocks skidding. Trading was moderate. Nikkei Dow Jones index: 12,474.51 (12,521.20).

Energy Services & Electronics is forecasting a profit increase of 20 per cent over the year in the latest rejection document spurring the bid from Peek Holdings. Another dividend increase of a third will also be paid. The directors see no point or merit in the intervention by Peek and promise of a £5 million cash injection by its backers. The profit forecast is based partly on the elimination of losses by S & E's New audio equipment subsidiary, which will be sold. The £3.4 million forecast is likely to keep the company out of the reach of A 95p they are a couple of pence above the value of the bid at Peek's share price of 27p.

● Hong Kong: Stocks fell in volatile trading. Hang Seng index: 1,510.09 (1,521.45).

● Frankfurt: Prices ended mixed amid some speculative buying of a few selected issues. The Commerzbank index reached a record by rising 4.1 points to 1,944.5.

● Paris: Expectations of lower interest rates and increased industrial investment nudged French stocks gently higher. The general market indicator finished the session with a 0.26 per cent advance.

FT Ordinary Share Index up 2.6 at 911.1. FTSE 100 Index down 1.8 at 1806.3. Pound: 1.2587; DM: 2.58; ¥: 11.74. Gold: \$315.16. Account: April 28 to May 10. FT All Share Index down 0.64 at 629.23. Sterling Index 77.9 (1975) enough to find that the day 100, RPI 368.1 (March) up 6.1 per cent on year.

COMPANY BRIEFING

Royal will fight to stay free

The revamped Royal Bank of Scotland issued what amounted to a strong warning to potential bidders yesterday that it will fight to the hilt to stay independent.

The message was clearly aimed at Lloyds Bank which is under a government bound obligation to sell-off 5 per cent of its 51 per cent shareholding. Royal has been given an unknown deadline in which to reduce its stake which could be used as a possible bid platform by another suitor. It is obvious Royal would look extremely unkindly on its rival, Lloyds, if it were to sell the entire chunk to a third party. Three years ago Royal was let off the hook after a Monopolies and Mergers ruling gave it independence.

Royal is confident that it has armed itself as far as possible with its recent Charterhouse merchant bank acquisition and the merger with Williams & Glyn due to be completed by the end of September. Announcing half-year results yesterday, well in the market stage, Sir Michael Harris, Royal's chairman, said: "The board is determined that the new Royal will remain an independent, outward looking UK bank."

In almost defensive language he added: "We have strong balance sheet, strong capital ratios and a market value in excess of £800 million—a figure which enables us to claim that we are truly one of the Big Five." When Royal agent is given and the merger goes through, Royal will have over 900 branches in the UK and Scotland.

Pre-tax profit for the six months to March was 34 per cent higher at £75.9 million and puts the group on course for an excellent full year.

FORMER Asda and Oriel chief executive John Fletcher (above) has landed himself with the sticky job of putting some profits back in the bag at Barker & Debon, which recently announced that poor management controls would mean a loss of £1.5 million for 1984. Instead of the hoped-for £3 million profit. The stricken sweets group approached Mr Fletcher a couple of weeks ago, having bought back company doctor Ronnie Altman to hold the fort meanwhile.

If shareholders approve his appointment, Mr Fletcher aims to use the group as his stock market vehicle and would take an option on 20 million shares at 7p. News that he was taking over sent the shares up 2p to 99p yesterday. He would be ready to showing a profit.

Higher net interest earnings and higher commission and fee income were behind the strong increase which offset higher charges for bad debts. Provisions for bad debts rose by £20 million to £24.8 million due to difficulties faced by small UK companies and particularly the continued recession in international shipping.

Royal has taken up the first tranche of its £200 million floating rate note which will be used to fund new, uncontrolled mortgage lending. The half-time dividend is up to 3.5p against 3.3p.

Combine Harvest

One swallow may not make a summer but 33 Swallow Hotels have certainly helped make a good winter season for the Sunderland-based Vaux group.

The brewing and hotels combine yesterday reported a 14 per cent rise in first half profits to £5.11 million with most of the improvement coming from the successful hotel operation.

Vaux chairman Mr Paul Nicholson is looking to expand the group's presence in hotels, pubs, and wines and spirits but yesterday made it clear that he is not prepared to pay the "junkyard" prices seen recently in order to add to Vaux's single London hotel the London International.

Reflecting increased investment in marketing and in the group's 600 strong pubs chain sales of packaged and draught beers showed a small volume increase during the half year lifting profit of the still dominant breweries division from £2.94 million to £3.26 million.

But the real driving force behind the rise in profit during the period to mid-March came from hotels where profits jumped from £1.48 million to £2.06 million thanks to a "particularly good" winter period.

Overall, trading results are expected to show continued progress in the remainder of the year. But Mr Nicholson warns that profits from property disposals are unlikely to reach last year's levels and that falling television advertising revenue will hit results of Type Tees Television in which the group has a 20 per cent stake.

The interim dividend goes up from 3.4p to 3.74p per share.

Strong Stakis

Stakis, the Glasgow-based hotels and casinos operator, is heading for another year of record profits after a strong first-half trading performance.

With all divisions contributing to the improvement, the group came through the six months trading to the end of March with a £5.4 million compared with £4 million in the same period a year ago. Turnover was up from £86.2 million to £89.9 million.

Hotel profits rose by 35 per cent to £3.4 million as the group reaped the benefits of a continuing refurbishment programme and Stakis will be looking to a further boost during the second half as a result of the acquisition of hotels in Hull and Cardiff earlier this year.

Sixty new rooms are meanwhile being added to the group's sole London hotel — the St Ermin's — as part of a major refurbishment project, and the Stakis directors are keeping a close watch on opportunities for additional representation in the booming London market.

Casino division profits were up almost 25 per cent at £2.39 million, partly reflecting the absence of the pre-opening expenses of the London casino that left their mark on results last time. A new casino is to open in Edinburgh in the summer but the Stakis directors acknowledge that the new operation is unlikely to have any significant impact on results in the current year.

The interim dividend goes up from 0.33p to 0.4p a share.

UEI set for growth

Development spending by UEI, the Quater TV graphics and advertising engineering group, began to pay off last year and most of the electronics activities, which now predominate, appears set for growth. The cable TV interests,

the main exception are no longer a drain.

Turnover was on an acceleration trend, reaching £83.3 million, an increase of £15.1 million, and this was before the Link subsidiary gained its big-ever order for HBC TV cameras. After a flat patch, pre-tax profit more than kept pace, rising to a record £10.4 million from £8.2 million. This was after higher R & D costs of £5 million.

Electronics profit accounted for three-quarters of the total after a 48 per cent increase, and although engineering results were static, the Cosworth engine business made a strong comeback. It is using the experience gained in racing cars to make high-performance engines or parts for Ford and Mercedes. Bodywork and tool manufacturing was less profitable but there was an improvement during the later months. Dunsley Heating was sold at a good profit, which covered extraordinary costs elsewhere.

There is no increase in the dividend total of £3.25p net a share, including the 3.25p final payment, because of the opportunities that the board sees for further growth and investment.

After the 20 times over-subscription of its offer for sale at 135p, the top brass at Colson was expecting to see the wallpaper group's shares go to a premium of 30p or 40p when the shares started trading on the market yesterday. But as Mr John Ashcroft, the chief executive and deputy chairman, watched, steps began to sell heavily, pushing the price down from 135p to 126p. Later, underlying support for the stock index it took up to 130p by the close, a 5p discount.

In short...

WHESSE, the heavy engineering and offshore construction group, yesterday announced improved interim pre-tax profits of £2 million compared with £1.13 million, but its heavy engineering works at Darlington was short of work, and turned in earnings of only £858,000, down from £1.5 million. It expects a better current half-year. The dividend is unchanged at 2.5p and the shares were unmoved at 104p.

ASSOCIATED paper industries raised its profits from £1.9 million to £2.3 million in the six months to March 31 and the board is confident about the results for the full year. The interim dividend is up from 1.5p to 2p.

Edited by Tony May

THE STOCK EXCHANGE

British Funds		
(Half)		
Treasury	79.5	79.5
Govt	79.5	79.5
10/10/84	79.5	79.5
11/10/84	79.5	79.5
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13/10/84	79.5	79.5
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SPORTS GUARDIAN



OUT ON HER OWN... Laura Davies ran out of partners yesterday as she took a six-shot lead.

Liz Kahn reports from Paris on the Hennessy Ladies' Cup

Laura's long field day

GOLF

An extraordinary saga unfolded yesterday in the second round of the £50,000 Hennessy Ladies' Cup at St Cloud where 21-year-old Laura Davies from West Byfleet, Surrey, eclipsed the field with a superb seven-under-par 67 for a 12-under-par total of 136. She outstaged the efforts of the Australian-born Jan Stephenson, who, after a second successive 71 is in second place.

With a three-ball ahead, Davies had some interminable gaps between striking the ball. But she chatted happily to Miss Moon as she played the greatest round of her life in only her second professional tournament. The Surrey girl is 5ft 10in and of strong build, which, together with a rhythmic swing, makes her the longest hitter on the WPGA tour. She combines this with a deft touch in her short game. Having shared the overnight lead with her fellow Curtis Cup player Penny Grice on 89, Davies opened yesterday with a birdie on the 416-yard first hole with a drive, a two iron and one putt from 25 feet. For four holes from the fourth she alternately picked up and dropped shots and was out in 35 to be six under.

Bob Fisher on the Royal Lympington Cup

Cudmore under threat

SAILING

Harold Cudmore, five times the champion and current holder of the cup, faces his toughest ever challenge in the British Open match racing championship for the Royal Lympington Cup which starts today. His nine opponents include six skippers from overseas, all of whom are engaged in the next America's Cup challenge.

From America, Tim Stearn, who recently threw in his hand with the challenge of the St Petersburg Yacht Club, is joined by Gary Jobson. Yves Pajot, from France, and Mauro Pellissier, of Italy, provide the European challenge, while Chris Law is Britain's best chance. Andrew Hurst, whose successes with the Admiral's Cupper, Cifraire 3, won him a place in the event when Lawrence Smith pulled out, and Graham Bailey, winner of the junior event last year, complete the line-up. Racing is in Western Fulmar 32 footers and the event is on a round-robin basis.

Yesterday's racing results & prices

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Includes HULL MAN who wins £41,555	
5 HOMES	£168.70
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TREBLE CHANCE POOL

24 pts £290.00

24 pts £10.35

24 pts £0.75

24 pts £0.55

£100,000

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WITH EFFECT FROM 1.1.85 UP TO 31.12.85

PLAYED MAY 1985 (UP TO 31.12.85)

MEMBERS RULES ARE AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

Sangster and Thomson land 356-1 treble

DACING

Richard Baerlein

Robert Sangster, at a course where he has acted as steward and Brent Thomson, the jockey Sangster brought over from Australia, completed a remarkable 356-1 treble at Chester yesterday with Seismic Wave (2-1), Infanteria (15-1) and Clamshell (15-8).

This combination had also won the last race on Wednesday with the 2-1 chance Field Hand, so they landed four of the last seven races at the meeting.

Seismic Wave and Infanteria were trained by Barry Hills, whose 15-1 double earned almost £36,000 in prize money. Hills also trained Field Hand, but Clamshell is handled by Bill Wadsworth.

After Seismic Wave had won his only race at two, I remember describing the son of the French Derby winner Youth as a possible classic contender and many regarded him as a horse to follow in 1984.

But after running fourth in the Guardian Classic Trial, he failed to win a race last season and had run three times unplaced this season.

It was a great comeback to win in the Group Three Ormonde Stakes, which was won last year by the Derby winner, Teenoso. There is no doubt that trying him over the extended distance of one mile five furlongs proved that all his hard work was not in vain.

His dam, Shellshock, also trained by Hills, ran second in this race while the trainer had not previously won in spite of his many successes on the course.

Thomson rode a well judged race on Seismic Wave, coming to challenge the pacemaker, Wagoner, as they entered the straight and beat him one and a half lengths.

Seismic Wave stumbled as he left the stalls and Thomson said he almost parted company with his mount. He consoled himself with the fact that it enabled him to settle down in last place and ride the race all his own way.

While Hills was winning his first Ormonde Stakes at the third attempt he was riding his sixth Derby Stakes with Infanteria, one of his two runners. He also ran the better backed Middlesex, who had been squeezed out by Lord Grundy at Epsom.

Nevertheless, there was quiet backing for Infanteria, fourth of five in his only other season. Early birds got 25-1 before he came down to 16-1.

The race was no Derby guide as Infanteria has not been entered. Hills considered him too backward and too unsuited to the course.

The only Derby entrant yesterday - Soldat Blue, ridden by Lester Piggott - ran moderately. The 11-8 favourite, Vertigo, did not do much better, finishing third, but from the entrance to the straight Infanteria came right away to finish three lengths in front of Truculent.

Hills expects Infanteria to train on and stay at least one and a half miles. With such tremendous form Hills must have visions of Royal Harmony, allegedly the best of them all, winning the Derby after his very promising run in the 3,000 Guineas.

The transfer of the Marley Roof Tile Oaks Trial until 1986.

Salisbury

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BARRY HILLS... stable in form

tomorrow because of no television coverage this afternoon seriously weakens today's Lingfield card.

The appearance of Phardante in the Hawthorn Stakes is a welcome sign that Guy Harwood is coming back into business after the stable being virtually shut down since Catala set it off with a bang in the William Hill Lincoln Handicap.

At the time it seemed that Harwood was going to sweep the board, but things change very rapidly in racing. On two-year-old form Phardante tops the form here, having won his first four races before finishing seventh of eight behind Reach in the Royal Lodge Stakes in his final outing.

Koff landed a gamble on his debut at Newmarket and was unhelpfully beaten by Sabona, to whom he was giving 6lb, at Kempton. As Sabona started favourite for the William Hill Futurity, Koff is entitled to a fairly high rating and this German-bred horse could prove very useful this season.

The benefit of a race when second to the very fit King Luther at Epsom tips the scales in favour of Alumnus, though he was beaten five lengths. He was eased when pursued by King Luther was clearly hopeless and King Luther is expected to win the Italian Derby.

Alumnus's winning form is on heavy ground, but I take him to score here.

Arthur still blames the defeat of Ron Forester in his last two races to his dislike of round courses. Therefore, as a course-and-distance winner and back to a straight course, he should take the May Handicap.

Puccini should start favourite for this afternoon's Charles Hestwick Champagne Handicap at Lingfield on the strength of his narrow defeat by Dorking Lad at Sandown.

Charles Hestwick is the winner is Eddie Zip (3.15), who appears to have been placed by his astute trainer, John Sutcliffe, to gain his first success of the season.

Eddie Zip, who came close up sixth to Kerskerry at Newmarket last month and followed that with a fourth to Gilderdale at Epsom. Today's opposition does not look so tough and, with the assistance of Pat Eddery, he can win off the 8lb handicap.

Stratford Street (2.45) looks another Lingfield winner after the tenacious way he held on to get to within a length and a half of the smart Brave Oves in his final outing at Epsom.

David Hordt

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10 6 News: International Assignment
10 36 Morning Story: Hal Finkle and

Thomas Wolfe, by William Saroyan.

10 45 Daily Service from the Church of the Holy Trinity Cathedral.

11 0 News: Trial by Headline. Ray Rokin. Animal murder cases of 1966 and '67.

11 45 Natural Selection: Man, who should foot the bill for local authority services?

12 00 Instant Sunshine: Will and music.

1 00 The World at One: News.

1 40 The Archers.

2 00 News: Woman's Hour with a report into post-natal depression.

3 00 News: Daughters and Sons, by Ivy Compton-Burnett. Drama.

3 45 News: Going Places. Motorcar and travel magazine.

4 00 Story Time: The Past to Myself, by Christabel Bingley.

5 00 News: Newsreading.

6 00 The Six O'Clock News.

6 30 In Other Words... the Bodgers. Jokes with a Scots flavor.

7 00 News: The Archers.

7 30 End of the Week.

8 00 Stop Press.

8 45 Any Questions? From Shanklin. Isle of Wight, with Dr Michael O'Donnell, Peter Marsh, Sue Sijm and John Palmer.

9 30 Letter from America by Allister Cooke.

9 45 Kaleidoscope: Art magazine.

10 15 The World at One: Voices in an Empty Room, by Francis King (10).

10 30 The World Tonight.

11 00 The World at One Tonight.

11 15 The Financial World Tonight.

11 30 Week Ending. Satirical review.

12 00 News: Weather: Interval.

12 30 Shipping forecast.

VHF: 11 0-12 00 Schools: 1 55 pm Listening Corner: 2-5 50 Schools: 11 0-12 15 Study on 4: 12 30-1 10 am School Night-Time Broadcasting.

Wales (240m): 4 0 am As Radio 5: 5 0 am Delany (Radio 5): 6 0 am As Radio 5: 6 30 am As Radio 5: 7 0 am As Radio 5: 7 30 am As Radio 5: 8 0 am As Radio 5: 8 30 am As Radio 5: 9 0 am As Radio 5: 9 30 am As Radio 5: 10 0 am As Radio 5: 10 30 am As Radio 5: 11 0 am As Radio 5: 11 30 am As Radio 5: 12 00 am As Radio 5: 12 30 am As Radio 5: 1 00 am As Radio 5: 1 30 am As Radio 5: 1 45 am As Radio 5: 2 00 am As Radio 5: 2 30 am As Radio 5: 3 00 am As Radio 5: 3 30 am As Radio 5: 4 00 am As Radio 5: 4 30 am As Radio 5: 5 00 am As Radio 5: 5 30 am As Radio 5: 6 00 am As Radio 5: 6 30 am As Radio 5: 7 00 am As Radio 5: 7 30 am As Radio 5: 8 00 am As Radio 5: 8 30 am As Radio 5: 9 00 am As Radio 5: 9 30 am As Radio 5: 10 00 am As Radio 5: 10 30 am As Radio 5: 11 00 am As Radio 5: 11 30 am As Radio 5: 12 00 am As Radio 5: 12 30 am As Radio 5: 1 00 am As Radio 5: 1 30 am As Radio 5: 1 45 am As Radio 5: 2 00 am As Radio 5: 2 30 am As Radio 5: 3 00 am As Radio 5: 3 30 am As Radio 5: 4 00 am As Radio 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Inventory No.

Government backs away from

Treasury proposals

Shake-up for nationalised industries off

By Michael Smith, Industrial Editor

The Government has backed down from seeking sweeping new parliamentary powers to control Britain's nationalised industries.

Mr Peter Rees, chief secretary to the Treasury, told the Commons yesterday that the Government had dropped plans to seek new legislation for the nationalised industries in the 1983-84 parliamentary session.

The Treasury's controversial proposal to tighten its control over running of the nationalised industries was regarded as a good candidate for inclusion in the Queen's Speech this autumn, after the Treasury began consultative talks with the industry last year.

However, the plan appears to have been thwarted by new moves to privatise British steel. This will be a substantial piece of government legislation requiring considerable parliamentary time.

The proposal on the nationalised industries has met with fierce opposition from virtually every quarter because of fears that the bill would concentrate too much power in the Treasury's hands.

Several senior Cabinet ministers are known to be strenuously opposed to the proposals,

which were outlined in a consultative document issued by the Treasury only hours before the Commons Christmas recess. The proposals have also been criticised by the nationalised industries and by consumer watchdog groups.

Mr Rees adopted the proposals would represent the most radical shake-up of the nationalised industries since the time when many undertakings were taken into public ownership after the war.

The proposals would permit the Treasury to set stringent new targets for the corporations, increasing fees among consumer lobbies, and the nationalised industries would be required to pay a new "poll tax" on their profits.

Mr Rees was indicating yesterday whether the Government was abandoning the proposals altogether. He said that discussions with the nationalised industries were continuing.

Representatives from the nationalised industries are expected to meet Mr Rees early next week as part of the continuing dialogue between the Treasury and the public corporations.

Government to hold fire on GCHQ rebels

By Richard Norton-Taylor

The Government is likely to hold off taking disciplinary action against going officials who have rejoined their union in defiance of the ban on membership, at least for the time being.

This emerged last night after 11 hours of talks between Civil Service union leaders and Sir Robert Armstrong, Cabinet secretary and head of the Home Civil Service, in Whitehall.

They agreed to consider a number of compromise proposals: one would be for those who rejoined their union to repay the £1,000 they received after they gave up membership last year. About 100 GCHQ officials are affected and have been told that they faced disciplinary action.

Mr Peter Jones, secretary of the Council of Civil Service

Unions, said last night that he and his colleagues would happen until a further meeting with Sir Robert, probably in a few weeks' time.

Civil Service union leaders yesterday filed their case against the ban with the European Commission for Human Rights.

The unions have instructed their lawyers to attempt to negotiate an agreement with the Government to maintain the status quo at GCHQ — where about 100 staff are still members of unions — while the commission considers their application.

The International Labour Organisation yesterday urged the Government to reconsider the ban, which an ILO committee said contravened a convention on workers' freedom of association and right to organise.



Sir Iain Sutherland, British ambassador to Moscow, and Lady Sutherland watch the parade in Red Square yesterday when armaments on view included an SS-20 missile.

Stonehenge Tighter checks ordered on MI5

By Martin Wainwright

THE ANCIENT ritual of the irresistible force and the immovable object seems certain to be enacted at Stonehenge in three weeks' time, barring an unexpected compromise between organisers of the free festival and the National Trust.

The grandly-named groups which organise the festival have embarked on a publicity campaign to counter the Trust's "Keep Away" advertisements.

Summons have gone out to members of the Polytechnic Circle, the Tigran Ukrainian Family and the Church of the Immaculate Conception, which paradoxically requires a whole lunar month to enact its rituals.

"The so-called custodians of stonehenge should realise that what they call a 'pop festival' is in fact a legitimate gathering, a ritual held by those who sincerely believe that there is a very special feeling to be attained there because of the magical situation," says the circle, a national society of anonymous members.

Over 150,000 stickers are being distributed to urge people to join the festival, which would be the 18th annual gathering near the henge. The organisers base their claim to legitimacy on the fact that the courts have granted the National Trust an injunction forbidding attendance against only 83 named individuals.

The trust is determined that no one will camp on the 1,400 acres of land it owns around Stonehenge. The civil law against trespasses will be invoked.

Mr Warren Davies of the Trust said that it was essential to prevent any repetition of the damage to prehistoric sites which occurred in previous years when up to 30,000 people attended the festival.

An English Heritage, the ancient monument commission which owns Stonehenge, has barred the traditional Druid solstice ceremony and surrounded the henge with barbed wire.

The commission's chairman, Lord Maclean, is known to be keen to encourage orderly rituals at Stonehenge and regards the festival as the greatest obstacle to allowing them.

"There is every difference between a ceremony lasting one night and six-week long camp site on one of Europe's most important archaeological sites," said Mr Davies.

Continued from page one

East Germans would look after me better."

In 1983 he delivered two letters containing secret information to a Soviet Embassy official who he believed was a senior officer of the KGB. When there was no response he continued collecting secret information at his home and was eventually uncovered. Last year he was sentenced to 22 years' imprisonment for offences under the Official Secrets Act.

There was surprise in the Commons when Mrs Thatcher stressed that Bettaney's attempts to get himself recruited as an agent of the Russian Intelligence service had not been successful.

Mr Kinnock said: "No man could have tried harder than Bettaney to get himself recruited to the Russian secret service. His fortune in incompetence is not sufficient to reassure about the general condition of our services."

He accused Mrs Thatcher of complacency, and said her response was "not good enough". He alleged the Bettaney case was only the latest in a series of incidents which had shown the security services were not as proficient as they should be but Mrs Thatcher insisted that there were no criticisms in the report of operational efficiency.

However, Mrs Thatcher appeared ready to consider a suggestion put to her by the chairman of the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee, Sir Anthony Kershaw, to demand a permanent inspectorate.

Mrs Thatcher firmly ruled out parliamentary involvement in the security services. She said: "I believe we should continue to enable the security services to run in a secret way — after all, those against whom they operate have the same right to secrecy."

But this did not satisfy Mr Jonathan Aitken, the Tory MP for Thanet South, who said Mrs Thatcher and Cabinet ministers had promised the highest ministerial watch on the security services after the Blun affair but the Bettaney report indicated that it was not good enough.

Prospects for settlement dim as teaching unions pull out of meeting with Joseph

By Andrew Moncur

All the teachers' unions last night opted out of a meeting with Sir Keith Joseph — and missed his latest firm refusal of more cash to fund an improved pay offer.

The unions decided against a joint approach with the employers, who went ahead with their informal meeting with the Education Secretary in a search for a solution to the dispute which has caused disruption for thousands of children.

But Sir Keith repeated his long-held argument that there could be no chance of seeking extra money without agreement on salary structure reform.

The employers' had come seeking ways to increase the 4 per cent offer already rejected by the teachers. They asked about the possibility of adjusting their financial targets, penalties and grants in the interests of a negotiated settlement. Sir Keith's answer was no.

He repeated his position that the Government will not find more money without strings for local authorities to settle with the teachers. Cash for any deal above 4 per cent

would have to come from local authority funds.

A Department of Education and Science spokesman said: "There was one set of circumstances in which he would be willing to go to his colleagues and ask for extra money: if the teachers and the employers were to reach an agreement which would be unambiguously good for children and affordable."

That was the position, qualified by his statement that he could not guarantee the response of his colleagues. That he first made last July. Negotiations on structure reform came to an abrupt end last December when the National Union of Teachers walked out of a salary-structure working party.

The prospects of a settlement at next week's meeting of the Burnham pay negotiating committee, headed by Sir John Worrie, independent chairman of the Burnham committee, said that he was still "cautiously optimistic".

Sir John, who chaired yesterday's informal talks between employers' and union leaders, said later: "There seems to exist a real determination to

endeavour to conclude a settlement."

Some teaching unions who initially wished to take up the invitation to meet Sir Keith, had attempted without success to persuade the NUT to change its mind. The NUT accused them of wasting time, which should have been devoted to seeking progress for the Burnham talks.

Mr Doug McAvoy, deputy general secretary of the NUT, accused them of being "stumped by the strenuous prospects of tea and biscuits with Sir Keith" that they had not got on with the business of the day.

The second largest union, the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, had been eager to talk to Sir Keith. But it backed out in response, it said, to the view of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, which sought to avert a split in union ranks.

Mr Nigel A. Gray, deputy general secretary of the NAEU, said: "We were still keen to go but the AMA told us it would embarrass them if only sections of the teachers could accept."

He regretted the NUT decision and said that he was pessimistic about the prospects of any constructive outcome next week. He said: "Unless there is a very strong moral obligation on all of us to explore all possible avenues open to us to find a solution."

Mr Fred Smithies, the NAEU general secretary, said that he believed it was the duty of the unions to take part in any approach that might lead to a settlement. "There is a very strong moral obligation on all of us to explore all possible avenues open to us to find a solution."

He regretted the NUT decision and said that he was pessimistic about the prospects of any constructive outcome next week. He said: "Unless there is a very strong moral obligation on all of us to explore all possible avenues open to us to find a solution."

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Rates help MP's death plunges Tories into tough byelection test in mid-Wales

Continued from page one

are known to be concerned about what they see as its unfairness and the possibility of a split between "wet" and "dry" wings of the party. A compromise solution appears the most likely.

Mrs Thatcher will chair a ministerial meeting later this month to agree proposals for change.

Alan Travis writes: David Steel, the Liberal leader, said Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, criticised Mrs Thatcher in the Commons yesterday for her failure to reform the rate system.

Mr Steel said that the tenth anniversary of her pledge to abolish the rating system had just passed and that no temporary relief would be a substitute for her redeeming that pledge.

Mr Kinnock demanded to know whether Mrs Thatcher, while engaged in a rates U-turn, was also going to give back to Scotland the £1,000 million taken away from its local authorities over the past five years.

Mrs Thatcher claimed that the domestic rate relief package had cancelled out the effects of revaluation and insisted that the high rate difficulties north of the border were due to high-spending Labour councils.

By Martin Linton and Ian Aitken

The Government faces a difficult by-election at Brecon and Radnor in mid-Wales after the death of the constituency's Tory MP, Mr Hooson, who died of cancer on Wednesday night at his London home after a long illness.

Mr Hooson won the seat in 1979 after a career in advertising and as the director of communications at Conservative Central Office. He turned a Labour majority of 3,012 into a Tory majority of 3,027. The seat had been held by Labour for 40 years.

Boundary changes helped him to boost his majority to 8,784 in 1983, with his own vote at 18,255, Labour at 9,471 and Liberal at 9,226.

For the Labour Party it is the first by-election in seven years in this parliament where it starts in second place and the seat only has a chance of taking a seat from the Government, but its margin over the Alliance is so narrow that there is bound to be a bitter fight for the tactical vote.

The Labour Party went out of its way last night to emphasise that it does not expect to win the by-election. Although Labour has done well there in the past the party's business managers emphasised that the constituency had been radically changed by the Boundaries Commission.



Tom Hooson — ousted Labour

The commission sliced three heavily Labour wards off the Brecon constituency and added them to constituencies to the south.

The seat is one of the largest in the country, stretching from the spa towns of Buth and Llandrindod Wells in the north down to the Welsh-speaking Labour stronghold of Ystradgynlais in the south, and it is farming country, with sheep outnumbering the electors by at least 10 to one.

Until 1983 it included some of the mining communities at the head of the valleys from

Brynmawr to Cefn Coed, where the Labour vote was strongest.

Tributes to Mr Hooson yesterday were led by the Secretary for Wales, Mr Nicholas Edwards. Mr Hooson won the seat in 1979 at the same time as his cousin Elynor Hooson, now the Liberal peer Lord Hooson, was defeated in the neighbouring seat of Montgomery, but the Liberals have recovered much of their strength in mid-Wales and now hold the two neighbouring seats of Ceredigion and Montgomery.

The seat has not, however, been allocated between the Liberals and the SDP and the Tories agreed to hold joint selection.

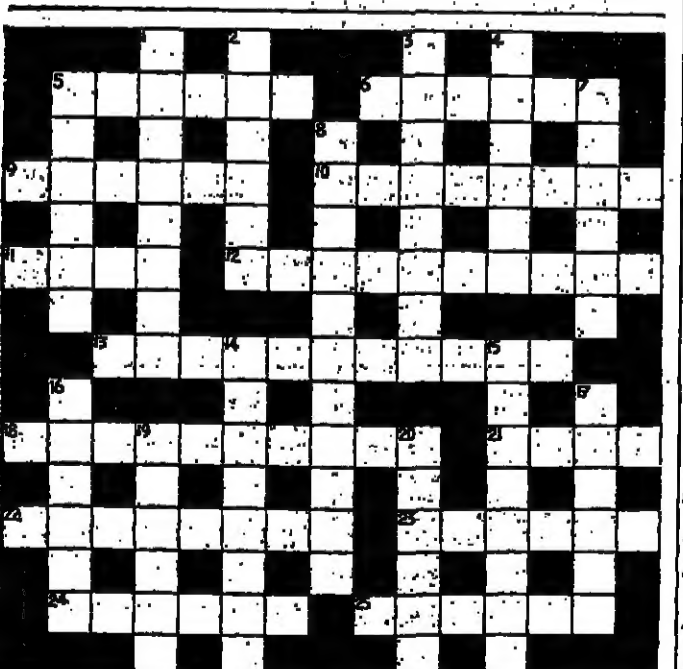
Labour was already in the process of selecting a candidate when Mr Hooson's death was announced. Possible candidates may include Dr Kim Howells, research officer for the Welsh Affairs Unit, and the former Labour MP for the seat, Mr Cerywyn Roderick. The constituency produced the most cliff-hanging result in electoral history in 1929 when the three main parties each won 23 per cent of the vote. Labour won by 14,511 (53.7) over the Conservative with 14,324 (53.3) and the Liberal with 14,162 (53.0).

1983: C. Hooson (Lab) 18,255; E. Hooson (Lib) 9,226; D. Hooson (Con) 9,471.

GUARDIAN CROSSWORD 17,232

APEX

13 letters (2 words) should really occur in the answers to the Down clues, the first in the second row and so on in the correct order up to the last letter, which should occur in 20. All these letters must be omitted when the answers are entered, and written out instead on the line below this introduction. Each clue consists of two definitions, one for the uncluttered answer, the other for the mutilated answer entered in the diagram: numbers in brackets indicate which is which. Example clue: "Close call (4, 5)". Answer: SE(0)UT. All Across clues are normal.



- ACROSS
- Playing two pieces of "Rigoletto" and "Aida" slowly (6).
 - About half of scores cut — it's the confusion (4).
 - Soft passage (3) — by Jupiter, perhaps (6).
 - All about to come into existence (8).
 - Advances (4) — a point in reader's action (4).
 - One of the woods performing awfully and within (3-7).
 - One out of tune in business — contraction (4).
 - Carries on with note and seems worried (10).
- DOWN
- Desires pay (8, 2).
 - One who turns out the winner (7, 6).
 - Radio band to arrange signals (3, 4, 4).
 - Keep the record polished (6, 7).
 - Plays with friends (7, 6).
 - Showers attendants (6, 7).
 - A Mendelssohn composition making one roguish? (7, 7-9).
 - Latin VIP — Horace, perhaps (3, 3, 5, 4).
 - Being a rounded projection (6, 6).
 - Ill-treats maidens (7, 6).
 - Ex-President Grant? (6, 7).
 - Discourages slimmers: (6, 7).
 - Exhausted shot (6, 7).
- Solution tomorrow

THE WEATHER

Showers, some sun

A NORTHEASTERLY airstream covers the British Isles but a ridge of high pressure will build over western areas during the day.

London, E. Angles, E. Midlands: "E" cloud with rain or drizzle, with sun at intervals. Wind N.W. 15 to 20 mph. Sea: 13 to 15 (S. to 50°). Clouds on coast.

S. SE and East S. England, Channel Islands: "E" cloud with rain or drizzle, with sun at intervals. Wind N.W. 15 to 20 mph. Sea: 13 to 15 (S. to 50°). Clouds on coast.

W. Midlands, S. Wales, S. E. Wales: "E" cloud with rain or drizzle, with sun at intervals. Wind N.W. 15 to 20 mph. Sea: 13 to 15 (S. to 50°). Clouds on coast.

W. Wales, S. Wales, S. E. Wales: "E" cloud with rain or drizzle, with sun at intervals. Wind N.W. 15 to 20 mph. Sea: 13 to 15 (S. to 50°). Clouds on coast.

W. Wales, S. Wales, S. E. Wales: "E" cloud with rain or drizzle, with sun at intervals. Wind N.W. 15 to 20 mph. Sea: 13 to 15 (S. to 50°). Clouds on coast.

AROUND THE WORLD

LUNCH-TIME REPORTS

London	12	15	100	1015
Edinburgh	10	12	100	1015
Birmingham	11	14	100	1015
Manchester	11	14	100	1015
Cardiff	11	14	100	1015
Belfast	11	14	100	1015
Stockholm	12	15	100	1015
Helsinki	13	16	100	1015
Oslo	14	17	100	1015
Reykjavik	15	18	100	1015
Copenhagen	16	19	100	1015
Stockholm	17	20	100	1015
Helsinki	18	21	100	1015
Oslo	19	22	100	1015
Reykjavik	20	23	100	1015
Copenhagen	21	24	100	1015
Stockholm	22	25	100	1015
Helsinki	23	26	100	1015
Oslo	24	27	100	1015
Reykjavik	25	28	100	1015
Copenhagen	26	29	100	1015
Stockholm	27	30	100	1015
Helsinki	28	31	100	1015
Oslo	29	32	100	1015
Reykjavik	30	33	100	1015
Copenhagen	31	34	100	1015
Stockholm	32	35	100	1015
Helsinki	33	36	100	1015
Oslo	34	37	100	1015
Reykjavik	35	38	100	1015
Copenhagen	36	39	100	1015
Stockholm	37	40	100	1015
Helsinki	38	41	100	1015
Oslo	39	42	100	1015
Reykjavik	40	43	100	1015
Copenhagen	41	44	100	1015
Stockholm	42	45	100	1015
Helsinki	43	46	100	1015
Oslo	44	47	100	1015
Reykjavik	45	48	100	1015
Copenhagen	46	49	100	1015
Stockholm	47	50	100	1015
Helsinki	48	51	100	1015
Oslo	49	52	100	1015
Reykjavik	50	53	100	1015
Copenhagen	51	54	100	1015
Stockholm	52	55	100	1015
Helsinki	53	56	100	1015
Oslo	54	57	100	1015
Reykjavik	55	58	100	1015
Copenhagen	56	59	100	1015
Stockholm	57	60	100	1015
Helsinki	58	61	100	1015
Oslo	59	62	100	1015
Reykjavik	60	63	100	1015
Copenhagen	61	64	100	1015
Stockholm	62	65	100	1015
Helsinki	63	66	100	1015
Oslo	64	67	100	1015
Reykjavik	65	68	100	1015
Copenhagen	66	69	100	1015
Stockholm	67	70	100	1015
Helsinki	68	71	100	1015
Oslo	69	72	100	1015
Reykjavik	70	73	100	1015
Copenhagen	71	74	100	1015
Stockholm	72	75	100	1015
Helsinki	73	76	100	1015
Oslo	74	77	100	1015
Reykjavik	75	78	100	1015
Copenhagen	76	79	100	1015
Stockholm	77	80	100	1015
Helsinki	78	81	100	1015
Oslo	79	82	100	1015
Reykjavik	80	83	100	1015
Copenhagen	81	84	100	1015
Stockholm	82	85	100	1015
Helsinki	83	86	100	1015
Oslo	84	87	100	1015
Reykjavik	85	88	100	1015
Copenhagen	86	89	100	1015
Stockholm	87	90	100	1015
Helsinki	88	91	100	1015
Oslo	89	92	100	1015
Reykjavik	90	93	100	1015
Copenhagen	91	94	100	1015
Stockholm	92	95	100	1015
Helsinki	93	96	100	1015
Oslo	94	97	100	1015
Reykjavik	95	98	100	1015
Copenhagen	96	99	100	1015
Stockholm	97	100	100	1015
Helsinki	98			